

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

ITS

PROGRESS IN EUROPE

FROM THE

IXTH TO THE XIXTH CENTURY.

With a glance at the artistic Works of Classical Antiquity, and concluding consideration
on the probable influence of the Great Exhibition, and on the present
state and future prospects of Art in Great Britain

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BY

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TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

INTRODUCTION.

THE influence of the cultivation of art on the wealth and the destiny of nations has never been disputed by those capable of considering the subject.

The mere trading peoples of the earth, however brilliant may have been their day of triumphant commerce, have always fallen into insignificance and ruin when the conquests and advances of other countries have destroyed their commercial ramifications. The Phœnicians, when their Tyre, their great entrepot, was swept away in the tide of the Alexandrian invasion, rose no more. Carthage, with her vast dependencies in Sicily and Spain, fell for ever, when Rome had destroyed her merchant fleets. The counter and the ledger in themselves have no intrinsic worth; a single campaign may destroy the purpose of their existence.

But to the producers, the real creators of wealth, political revolutions are less fatal. The prosperity of the artist and the artisan, the creators of those various products which make up the sum of civilised comfort, and embellish and refine our existence, is rarely destroyed by mere political convulsions. Their creations are as valuable to the new governors as to the old; and thus Athens became more materially prosperous after the loss of her independence; for she long ruled the world from her academies and her ateliers more effectually than in the time of her pretence to military greatness; and the meanest implements of her artists wrought more permanent dominion for her than all the blood shed at Marathon or at Plataea.

How far the possession of splendid monuments increases the prosperity of a metropolis we may learn from the spectacle of modern Rome. Her ancient imperial power crushed, her modern spiritual dominion fast escaping her, lost to all rank as a political capital, she yet possesses her magnificent temple, the unrivalled St. Peter's, and a few masterpieces of antique art, her "Laocoon," and her "Apollo;" and these monuments alone, cause her native population to be annually exceeded in number by the strangers within her walls, drawn there by the magnetic influence of art, to pour wealth from every country of Europe into the coffers of her citizens.

The possession of the "Venus," and of a few other blocks of marble, that the chisel of a Praxiteles may have spent a few days upon, and of a few pieces of canvas upon which the magic labour of a Raphael may have been bestowed, are worth annual millions to the Florentines.

While Paris, as a great centre of modern art, as the fountain of European taste,

has been for centuries the first object of the traveller; and in our day, the Englishman, the German, the Russian, the American, even the Italian, all make Paris the principal point of the tour which is now necessary to the final accomplishment of every education. The millions that have thus found their way into the French capital are beyond calculation, and her Louvre, her Tuileries, her Palais Royal, her bronze column, and her Egyptian obelisk, may be considered by those who are incapable of seeing them in any other light, as "splendid commercial investments."

No such crowd of art-worshippers ever rushed to the shrine of London—that vast aggregation of counting-houses, desks, ledgers, docks, stocks, and warehouses, formed into a gigantic hodge-podge of dark narrow streets and winding alleys, teeming with a population of clerks, occupied casting-up, checking, and counter-checking—that London, with its atmosphere of coal smoke, its river of diluted sewage—without a single public monument of importance, without one noble street, without a single public fountain, without a public statue, except the contemptible effigies in cocked hats among the dingy foliage of our squares. No art-worshippers crowded to London, such as many now living can recollect it, in all its dingy reality. In public buildings of real merit and importance, in fountains, statuary, palaces, galleries of art, and all that make up the attractions of a brilliant metropolis, we are still lamentably deficient, notwithstanding great progress during the last forty years. But a new era has recently broken upon us, and we have seen the deficiencies which our national vanity so long concealed from our too partial eyes; we have established schools of design, held cartoon competitions, and endeavoured, in our frantic efforts after art, even to galvanise into existence a Gothic Hotel de Ville, in default of any other palatial edifice of respectability; and, last of all, really waking up to the advance of other nations, we have taken a truly magnificent step in the right direction, and invited the whole world to an international tournament of art. In this cause, though we have but too long exhibited our incapacity to construct a permanent national palace, we have yet constructed a temporary one, worthy to receive the contributions of the nations, and, however some may regret that this great national event should be mixed up with Court favour and idle pageantry, it is yet a noble expression of national development.

We are on the eve of making enormous strides, both in political, social, and artistic economy, and at such a juncture it has appeared to me that an outline of the adventurous story of art, in its various distinct fields of development, would be an acceptable offering to the spirit of the exciting epoch in which we are struggling on towards a better and a higher standing as a civilised nation.

In such an attempt I have thought it better to confine myself within very moderate limits, so as to present a concise panoramic view, rather than an extended treatise filled with curious research, only valued at its true worth by the thoroughly initiated in each particular branch.

In order to carry out my intention of conciseness, I have generally confined myself to the history of art during the last thousand years only, and have even then avoided all the curious learning and elaborate detail with which this theme might be enriched. I have not sought to establish nicety of dates, or subtle division of styles; but have

endeavoured to seize only the striking *silhouette*, or general outline of each subject, giving occasionally such touches of interior finish to the figure presented, as seemed particularly invited by the occasion.

In architecture, for instance, I have gone farther back than the thousand years prescribed, in order to sketch its rise and beautiful development in Greece ; but, although I may linger to observe the mode of its growth, and detail a few of its points of singular excellence, and some of its defects, I do not enter into the details of the Prostyle Tetrastyle of the Ionic order, or the Peripteral Hexastyle of the Doric, nor the mysteries of the Hypæthral Decastyle of the Corinthian—I do not dwell upon the plan of the Peripteros, or the Opisthodomus, or of the marble Plutei, and their gates giving access to the Prodromus—all this is for the archæiological architect alone. With the names of dry bones I have nothing to do, but only with the spirit that animated them, and which, existing languidly through the mazes of Roman architecture, blazed up again in all its vigour in our own Gothic cathedrals. I shall allude to the influence which the introduction of glazed windows exerted in architectural elevations, but whether that influence commenced as early as the time of Nero, when a kind of glass was first tried as a substitute for the *lapis specularis*, or whether such influence was not apparent till the time of Constantine, or not till some three or four centuries later, I shall not stay to examine ; nor shall I stay to decide whether the coloured windows, apparently alluded to by Prudentius in the passage describing the church of St. Paul,* restored by Honorius, alluded to *painted* windows, or only to a geometrical disposition of coloured glass, or merely to the mosaics of the apsis and other portions of the building. It will be sufficient for my purpose in this branch of the subject to perceive that the *Roman basilica* eventually developed itself into the Gothic cathedral, and that the Gothic was superseded by an extraordinary and eventually slavish and insane restoration of Greek and Roman forms in all their details, followed by a subsequent similar return to the Gothic. Such bold features of art-history I shall endeavour to trace ; for, as I view the course of art, it is to be considered, not as a succession of various detached and fitful epochs of invention, with dismal blanks between ; but, on the contrary, as a continuous current of ideas, developing themselves according to the materials and circumstances they have to deal with, as a stream of art, giving animation to marble, imparting its magic breath to the various forms of foliage and flowers, as it bends them to its purposes, and, except when the hindering of stolid governments, or political revolutions, drives it into distortions and unnatural abasement, gliding gently onward towards a yet unperceived and undreamed-of perfection, finding beauties in every stage of its progress. One would think Shakspeare, whose universal mind seems to have embraced all subjects, was meditating on the course of the spirit of art,

* “The magnificence of the place is full of regal pomp. The good prince by whom it was consecrated has caused its walls to be covered with rich paintings, at great cost. The beams are gilded, so that the light is all of gold, like the sun in the East. The arched windows are filled with many colours, as the meadows in spring sparkle with the colours of many flowers.” This allusion to coloured glass has been thought by some to allude to the glass-coated tesserae of the mosaics, and that the arched openings or spaces may be the semi-sphere of the apse and corresponding parts.

and symbolizing its advance in the image of a stream, gliding onward towards eventual perfection, in the following passage :—

“ When his fair course is not hindered,
He makes sweet music with the enamelled stones,
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage,
And so, by many winding nooks, he strays,
With willing sport to the wild ocean,
Making a pastime of each weary step
Till the last step hath brought *him* to his love,
Where *he will* rest, as, after much turmoil,
A blessed soul doth in Elysium.”

This exquisite poetry, perhaps penned upon the banks of the gentle Avon, seems, with the simple alteration of a tense or pronoun, to express exactly that which I have essayed to say in prose.

Following out this view of the subject, I shall decry any mad attempt to strain the current of art from its legitimate course, while, at the same time, I shall offer a few remarks on the possible advent of an original and national style, both in architecture and other branches of art, formed on true artistic principles.

In sculpture—in painting—in metal work—in textile fabrics—in carvings in wood and ivory—in mosaic—in glass work of every description—and in other branches of production in which the arts of design play a conspicuous part, I shall endeavour, in the treatment of each particular subject, to submit it to an alchemy which may evolve its true theory of the beautiful, according to its purpose, its material, and its necessary form and structure; calling to mind the Hellenic maxim that “nothing is beautiful which is not good;” an axiom repeated on the eve of dark ages by the fathers of the church—*Kaì ταύτον ἐστὶ τὰγαθὸν τὸ καλόν.*

That “no *body* is truly beautiful which is not constructed with strict and precise reference to its destination”—that “beauty cannot exist without the symmetry and order”—that “true beauty is more beautiful as a whole than in any of its parts”—that “the highest beauty consists in unity,”—are maxims which formed the philosophy of art and the explanation of the beautiful, as early as the dawn of Grecian civilization, and are as true now as then. I shall endeavour to apply them, to each branch of art I am now about to discuss, without pedantry, but with that earnestness which must feel who love art more for itself than even for its consequences, great as they may be to every nation cultivating it with the sedulous perseverance of a true devotee, without which no great results were ever yet realised in its domain.

Yet, in artistic criticism I have always considered the expression of individual sentiment more generally desirable than the cleverest exposition of accepted canons, for while we have many always ready to apply the generally-received tests to every fresh work of art, but few are found willing to risk the ordeal of putting forth new ones. I shall not, therefore, shrink from the latter course. For if even the greater portion of my positions be overthrown by the “well-trained bands” of custom, precedent, or superstition, and but one or two ideas only are allowed to strike root, as additions to the guiding principles of art, I shall be more than rewarded for all the obloquy of defeat on others.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

ARCHITECTURE.

AMONG the arts which have imparted grace and dignity to the history of nations, and marked their various phases with the most striking monuments, Architecture holds the most conspicuous, if not the highest place. The great interest attaching to the history of architecture arises, in the first place, from the fact that a knowledge of its first principles is necessary to man, so soon as he emerges from nomadic barbarism, and requires a fixed place of shelter—a home. Secondly, because it is necessary to the culture and development of one of man's highest faculties—the religious element of his nature.

In the hut which forms his own residence, the first rude principles of architectural construction crudely develop themselves; while in the temple, or holy precinct, made sacred to the divinity he worships, embellishments are essayed, which go on developing and extending till repetition, variation, and experience gradually evolve a special school of art; such, for example, as that of Greece.

The earliest huts, and the earliest temples, were, no doubt, of the most rude and diminutive construction. The first temples, according to Hesiod, were the *σκολι*, which would seem to have been nothing more than a hollow tree, venerated, perhaps, as marking the spot on which some event connected with the history or religion of the tribe had taken place, or perhaps as stricken by thunder, and thus rendered sacred, as the vehicle or instrument on which the divine power had been manifested,—the fulmen, or thunderbolt, being the chief symbol of omnipotence assigned to the highest divinity of Grecian worship. Thus, in the trunk of some vast tree, hollowed, as it were, by the divine hand, a rude image of the divinity was placed, as in a niche; and so the custom of building niches or canopies for important statues may have originated.

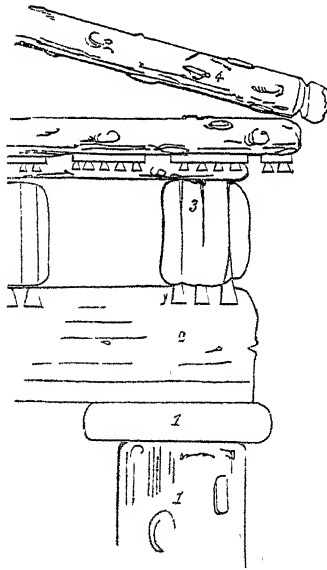
The arts, among a finely-organized race, do not remain stationary. In the instinctive perception of the beautiful—one of the glorious faculties which distinguish men from the lower animals—lies the secret of artistic origination and progress. The Greeks at an early period invested their wooden huts with a kind of rustic symmetry, which became the type upon which the leading forms of those

temples were founded, which afterwards became the admiration of the world as miracles of artistic conception and execution.

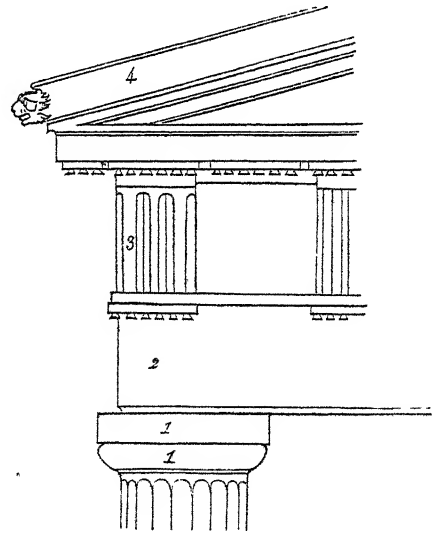
Sir Charles Fellows, in his *Travels in Asia Minor*, describes the timber dwellings of the present peasantry as differing little in style to what they must have been three thousand years ago; so that we may yet see the wooden models upon which the masterpieces of Grecian architecture were founded.

It is easy to conceive that, in a country abounding in timber, the trunks of trees would be used to support the roofs of dwellings, as they became more permanent and substantial; and that such supports should afterwards be imitated in stone in more important works, is consistent with all we know of the imitative progress of art.

If theory were insufficient, the general form and all the details of the ancient Doric temples are sufficient evidence that they were idealized copies of rude wooden structures. First, we have the proportions of the column, tapering towards the top in the same degree as the trunk of a tree of similar bulk. Then we have the square base of the column,* which represents the tile or stone upon which the timber column was placed to prevent decay. The top also was covered with a small slab (No. 1) of wood or stone, to prevent the drainage of moisture into it from the beam which it supported. The beam (2) became, in the stone structure, the entablature, and



A PORTION OF THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE IN WOOD.



A PORTION OF THE IDEALIZED COPY IN STONE.

above, the ends of the beams (3) became the triglyphs of the frieze, which in the wood were perhaps scored with three or more indents, by way of rude ornament; these indents, in the stone imitation, form three intermediate bands, from which the *triglyph* receives its name; or, the marks of the triglyphs may have been sug-

* In the early Doric the bases of the columns were not distinct, but formed one common base, the *podium*.

gested by the natural splits which would take place in that direction during the drying of the timber.

Other, minor features, can be traced in a similar manner, not only in the Doric, but up to the trusses, and some other features of the highly-wrought Corinthian order.

It is thus evident that the forms of the earliest Grecian order of architecture were immediately founded upon those of structures of wood. Indeed, Pausanias informs us, that the earliest temples themselves were of wood; and we may imagine the *σκηνοί*, to have been the origin of the cella, to which additional space may have been added, as the population of the neighbourhood increased, and it became necessary to protect the immediate vicinity of the sacred statue from vulgar intrusion. The term temple, in Greek *τεμενος*, meaning to cut off or separate (*τεμνωω*), the land thus appropriated being separated from the surrounding district by a certain solemn formula. These first additions were doubtless, as Pausanias informs us, of wood, and a *perfect* temple of wood—a great improvement upon its prototype, the hut—in all probability preceded the temple of hewn stone.

The simple grandeur of the Greek temple in its perfected state and fullest dimensions, surrounded with its double or even triple row of columns, is an object too well known to require description, and it now remains only to discuss briefly but critically its merits in an artistic point of view.

Its first great merit is its national originality; for that it was not an idealized improvement upon Egyptian models, as similarity of proportion has led some to suppose, is not supported by any facts; and from the wide field of comparison open to modern critics, it now appears evident that art, in its infancy, was rarely carried from one state to another, but more frequently arose independently, from the natural wants of each distinct people; and the similarity of art in its early stages, in widely different countries, is to be ascribed to the similarity in the organization, and consequent similarity of wants and tastes, in all races of men, during their first steps from barbarism to civilization.

It is possibly true, however, that the Greeks, as their architecture advanced to perfection, which happened at a time when the intercourse with Egypt became frequent, borrowed some ideas from that source. This view is borne out by the similarity of *proportion* in the columns, which more closely resemble the massive supports of the Egyptian monuments than the trunks of trees, in which they more immediately originated. Nevertheless, the details remain strictly distinct and national.

Next comes the question of general fitness, and here again the verdict must be favourable. The earlier Greek temples are rather to be considered as residences of the local deity, and not receptacles for worshippers; and thus the interior, rarely lighted, except from the entrance doorway, was shrouded in a dusky light, which imparted an indistinctness and mystery to the statue of the divinity, highly favourable to that kind of feeling and veneration, which it was sought to inspire; while externally, the projecting cornice, and the single or double colonnade, were admirably fitted to produce that grateful shade so desirable in southern climates.

Thus far, fitness of form to purpose, one of the great principles of art, is admirably fulfilled. Then arises the question of fitness of form, proportion, and

detail, to material; and here, the conscientious critic must deny to the ingenious Greek the same meed of praise. To copy slavishly in stone a mode of construction that might be excellent in wood, is at variance with the true principles of art. The distinct qualities of the new material ought to have suggested a distinct mode of construction, for which it was especially suited. Thus, to refer to a modern English example, the columns (lately removed) of the *Quadrant*, were, though of *cast-iron*, made of the proportion required in *stone*, while one-fourth of the thickness, in such a material as iron, would have been amply sufficient. The facilities afforded for enrichment also, in casting metal, ought to have suggested a totally distinct style of ornamentation.

But the Greeks appear to have perceived at a later period, that the *details* suggested by wooden structures were not applicable to stone; and with this view, in the Ionic and Corinthian orders, swept away the triglyphs, and some other details belonging to timber buildings, from the frieze—thus forming a field upon which to display the most exquisite specimens of sculpture in stone and marble.

As luxury increased, the column, which had originally been composed of several blocks or drums fixed at the core by means of iron or copper cramps, was wrought from the quarry in a single shaft; and princes rivalled each other in presenting valuable columns of this description to temples in the progress of construction. Thus Croesus contributed the greater number of the pillars towards the building of the temple at Ephesus; and a very interesting record of this custom exists in the ruins of the temple of Labranda, in Caria, the front of the columns bearing tablets inscribed with the names of the original donors.

Every available part of the temple was eventually covered with magnificent sculpture—the pediment or gable, was filled by mighty compositions from the hand of a Phidias or a Praxiteles, as was the *metope*, or space between the triglyphs of the Doric frieze.

Taking into consideration the effect of the entire composition, as carried out in the finest models of the Greek temples, it becomes a question whether the early architects, who decided the eventual forms by copying the first stone temples from wooden ones, would have been so successful if they had aimed at entire originality, and had treated the more solid material according to principles of construction arising out of its own peculiar qualities.

However this may be, it is certain that, when decoration was attempted, the ancients were as continually falling into inappropriate imitation as the moderns, arising perhaps from the imitation of antique forms, as of something sacred, and not to be rashly infringed. This spirit of imitation would seem to have been necessary to true artistic progress in its earlier stages; as we find that in the Persian and Assyrian monuments which have been recently made known by modern travellers and discoverers, discrepancies of this description do not occur, and yet they are vastly inferior in abstract beauty of form to the works of the Greeks and Egyptians, which can both be charged with the inconsistencies alluded to.

I have not thought it necessary for my present purpose to go farther back than the earliest development of architecture in Greece; but having mentioned Egypt

incidentally, I may here state that the old theory, of the Egyptian style having originated in the custom of cutting their temples out of the solid rock, is now exploded, which I mention the more willingly, as the explanation of the fallacy exhibits an artistic error similar to that which induced the Greeks to reproduce wooden forms in stone.

The *excavated* Egyptian temples bear evident marks of having been copied from buildings raised in the manner of those of the Greeks, by means of horizontal beams supported by upright columns, and the Egyptian architect, with all his sense of the grand and majestic in his art, committed, by the introduction of simulated beams where the living rock itself formed the solid roof, an unpardonable breach of the simplest æsthetic principles.* According to the latest chronological computations, some of the Egyptian excavated temples date more than 3000 years before the Christian era; and if this computation be correct, how deeply into hoar antiquity must we endeavour to pierce, to give a date to the monument erected upon the column and beam principle, which served as the model of the more modern excavated works, themselves 5000 years old.

This digression has led me slightly out of my way, though it has, at the same time, served to illustrate an important architectural principle. But I must not, even for a similarly valuable illustration, wander more widely into the interesting field of Egyptian or Assyrian architecture, as my purpose is only to treat of that of the last ten centuries, merely briefly noticing those styles of classical art, which especially led up to the modern. In doing so, I have not thought it necessary to go farther into the arts of antiquity than the origin of architecture in Greece, which directly influenced that of Rome, from which the modern architecture of Western Europe is directly derived.

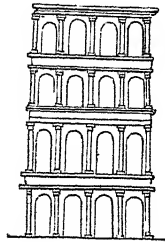
I must now pass rapidly to the art as practised by the Romans. This remarkable nation appears to have possessed the knowledge of the arch, and its true application from a very remote period; at all events as early as the age of the Tarquins, when the great Cloaca was constructed. And it was this application of the arch to public buildings, both as a vehicle of ornament as well as strength, which imparted to Roman structures in which it was adopted, a character totally distinct from that of Greek buildings, and laid the foundation of the principles upon which the vast European structures of the middle ages were erected. Let us examine a segment of the Coliseum, and compare it with a Greek temple. The latter is only composed of one story, and the eye, at a proper distance, embraces the whole design at a glance; but in the Roman structure, the parts are multiplied, and tier above tier arises, over which the eye of the spectator must travel in succession before it can fully comprehend the whole.

Æsthetically examined, this composition is open to objections as great as those urged against the Greek temple. The column, that fascinating and necessary feature of the Greek structure, is here become a parasite; and the sham of the pilaster will

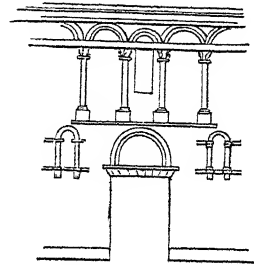
* Herodotus says, that the origin of the Egyptian column was the trunk of the palm-tree, and no doubt, from the similarity of its proportions, it arose, like that of the Greeks, from the imitation of timber dwellings; as the cupola is ingeniously said to have had its birth in the East, from the form of the tent of its nomadic tribes, who, as they became settled, imitated the form of their home of the desert in more permanent materials.

not bear analysis. The arches alone, in every case, carry the superincumbent wall, and the attached pillar becomes an unnecessary excrescence. It imitates the function of the Greek column when not required, just as the triglyph of the Doric frieze imitated beams which no longer existed.

A somewhat similar application of the arch and column prevailed till the fall of the Western Empire; but at that time, and even so early as the 3rd century, in the reign of Diocletian, all symmetry was comparatively lost, as will be seen by the diagram from the palace of that emperor, at Spalatro.



PART OF THE COLISEUM.



PART OF THE PALACE OF DIOCLETIAN AT SPALATRO.

Both the above examples tend to show how Grecian simplicity of idea in architectural composition had been departed from, and how much more complicated was the combination of forms resulting from the liberal use of the principle of the arch; but while we admit the superior magnificence of the Roman combinations, we cannot allow them the same merit of simple grandeur and oneness of idea which forms the great perfection of a Grecian temple. It is well known, however, that the Romans erected many temples upon a similar general plan to those of the Greeks, though they seldom employed the ancient Doric or even the Ionic order, preferring the Corinthian. But it is not with such works that I have to deal here, but rather with the striking departures from Greek models, by means of the use of the arch, which produced, under one form of application, the dome of the Pantheon, and in another the magnificent pile of arcades, gallery above gallery, which we still admire in the gigantic ruins of the Coliseum.

In these new developments of the main features of Grecian architecture, by the addition of a new one, the oneness of composition, as I have said, was, to a certain extent lost, for want of a true artistic feeling in Roman artists; the cohesion in the multiplied parts wanted that true æsthetic continuity of idea which should have welded the whole together in such a way that it could not be separated without injuring the design. This problem was not solved by the Romans. The composition of their noblest remaining monument, the Coliseum, consists of a series of layers, as it were, of colonnades, or rather arcades, placed one over the other, without any further connection of design than their accurate superposition one over the other. The upper arcade might be removed without injuring the general effect, and so indeed might the second and third successively, leaving the lower arcade as perfect, as a composition, without them

as with them. It remained for the Goths, the barbarians, to solve the problem, and give cohesion to the alliance of the arch and the column, as I shall endeavour to show.

The conversion of Constantine to Christianity gave a new life to the rapidly-declining architecture of Rome. A number of Christian churches were erected upon a model quite distinct from that of the pagan temples. The temples, as I have before stated, were considered rather as the residence of the particular deity, than as places of public worship, and but small space was provided within the temple itself, although abundant shade and shelter was afforded to attendant crowds, on great occasions, beneath the spacious colonnades without.

When therefore places of public worship were required for the new faith, where the Gospel might be preached to a large assemblage, and where the congregation might join in prayer with the preacher, the Roman Basilicæ, or courts of law, were found more convenient models than the temples, and some were positively converted into churches, others being constructed upon their model, and many of the more ancient existing churches of Italy still claim the title of Basilica in token of their early foundation.

The original law courts, or basilicæ, of the Romans, were large open halls, on either side of which rose a row of columns, which, while they served to support the roof, divided the total space within the external walls into three compartments, corresponding to the nave and side aisles in modern churches. Above the principal columns, with their entablature and cornice, rose a series of much smaller ones, which were the immediate supports of the roof, forming galleries above the side aisles, which were the only covered portion of the building; the nave, or central portion of the hall, being open to the sky, or, if roofed, having large openings to admit light and air. In the time of Constantine, however, side lights, probably even glazed, were beginning to be introduced, as existing churches of that period would seem to show, though, in many cases, the windows may have been later additions.* The tribune, or seat of the magistrate, a semicircular recess at the end of the basilica, formed, in the primitive churches, the place for the altar, and the point from which the officiating priest addressed the congregation.

It would be impossible to follow out here all the modifications which followed in succession, and rendered the basilicæ suited, in all respects, to their new purpose. But many churches still exist of the 4th and 5th centuries, which are most interesting monuments of the art of the period, opening a delightful field of study to the student of architectural history. To these venerable monuments of the primitive ages of Christianity our oldest cathedrals are but works, as it were, of yesterday.

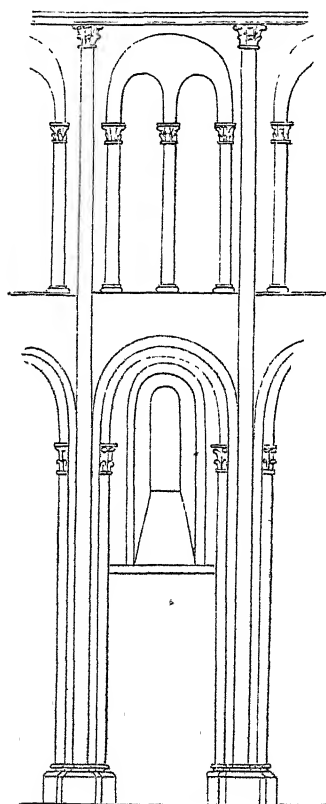
Having arrived at the period when the Christian architecture commences its career, we are nearing the point, in the progress of architectural design, which forms the true transition link between classical and modern architecture, between Roman and Gothic; that point at which the barbarian but original genius of the architects of the lower ages, solved the problem I have before alluded to, of uniting

* It was not till a much later period that the transept was introduced, to give the churches the cruciform character which was so long considered essential.

in one cohesive and homogeneous design the column of the Greeks and the arch of the Romans.

The two stories of columns in the basilica, or church, till much later than the time of Constantine, continued to be without any connecting feature of design ; as in the case of the Coliseum, the upper story might have been removed without injuring the effect of the lower ; and it was not till the period when nearly all the most accredited writers upon the art, have described it as being at its lowest depth of debasement, that a more complete idea of using the combined elements of the arch and the column arose. That is the period when, as an art of design, the ancient or classical architecture of Europe may be considered to close its career, and modern, or *Gothic* architecture, to use a generally-accepted term, may be said to begin.

The fresh sentiment which at once founded an entirely new school of architectural



design, was that which successfully united, in one continuous composition, an elevation or façade of several stories. This was effected by a simple but beautiful expedient, long considered by modern critics the first step of utter barbarism ; I mean that of substituting a group of columns for a single one, making the central one shoot gracefully upwards, through every story of the building, and through several orders of columns and arcades, until its capital rested beneath the uppermost horizontal line of the whole composition ; while others finished their upward career at lower points, each still forming integral portions of the whole ; being allied and held together by a series of connecting bands, and each springing from the same source. The shorter columns of the group supporting the lower arcades, while the taller shoot upwards to the highest point of the building, supporting the vaulted arch-work of the stone roof. The diagram in explanation, is from the church of Conques in the south of France, which exhibits an example of this species of composition, before the introduction of the pointed arch, and before the groined vaultings of the pointed roof, subsequently introduced, gave rise to a more complete and beautiful development of the idea.

It is probably a work of the 10th or 11th century, and is not selected as one of the earliest specimens, as the works of the Lombards in the north of Italy exhibit happy innovations of the same description as early as the 6th, 7th, and 8th centuries ; and probably indications of the same character may be found in some of the churches of Ravenna, executed under the patronage of Placidia, immediately previous to the crash of the Roman empire in the west, in the 5th century.

It is an example, which marks very clearly the principle of a group of connecting columns, and although it is possible, as I have said, that this felicitous innovation may have been foreshadowed in some of the later works of the last race of Roman architects, it appears more probable that it is due to the original and more daring and innovative genius of the north; for there are no traces of it in the magnificent church of St. Sophia, built by Justinian at Constantinople, in the 6th century; nor do the churches built in the Byzantine style at a later period, by Charlemagne, exhibit this feature in a prominent manner; they exhibit only an extension of the latest phase of Roman art, preserved in the eastern portion of the Empire, and given back to Western Europe again, by the courses of the Danube and the Rhine, as soon as that portion of the shattered Empire of the West had risen into independent states sufficiently settled to receive it.

But the style thus imported was now an exotic in those regions; and the one which I have supposed, arose from the meeting of northern daring and Roman luxury on the plains of Italy, the true Gothic, soon superseded it, and became, as it developed itself, that magnificent art, which covered Western Europe with its "sky-cleaving" cathedrals, whose lofty towers and wondrous fretted spires are examples of design, of scientific construction, of complication of parts, and vastness of scale, to which classical art never attained.

I have thus, at greater length than I intended, endeavoured to trace the successive phases of three great architectural epochs, which are linked together in close relationship, and which immediately preceded, and directly led to, the architecture of the last ten centuries.

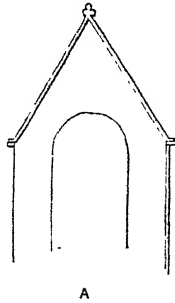
The first epoch is illustrated by the Greek temple; the second by the Roman amphitheatre; the last by the Gothic cathedral.

The Greek temple exhibits the direct transition of the art from wood to stone, as a material of structure. The Roman amphitheatre exhibits the union of the arch with the simple beam and column; and the earliest Gothic cathedrals exhibit the first perfect blending of the three features; giving to the arch its due predominance as a higher and more scientific contrivance for supporting superincumbent weight than the simple column and beam, which latter is, in Gothic art, almost dispensed with; as the arch-work springs boldly from the columns themselves, in the construction of some of the finest cathedrals of the high Gothic era, which may be considered to be about the middle of the 14th century.

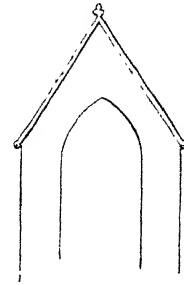
Having fairly arrived at the starting point of Gothic art, we may now prepare for seeing it branch off with many distinct ramifications in different countries and epochs; but it attained its most complete and consistent development in France, Germany, and England, from the middle of the 13th to the middle of the 15th century.

In the Gothic of middle and southern Italy, a lingering reminiscence of the Byzantine and debased Roman styles continued even to the time of the *renaissance*; but in the north of that peninsula, a more legitimate Gothic developed itself; in the region, in fact, where it had originated; that is to say, in Lombardy, where its first seeds were sown, and where it eventually produced such monuments as the Cathedral of Milan. But it is to the north of the Alps that we must look for the true development of Gothic art, during the ten centuries of progress which I am about to trace.

Already, between the 9th and the 12th centuries, a fine homogeneous style had been formed, possessing nearly all the qualities of Gothic composition, except the pointed arch. This last feature, long known in the East, and brought into Spain by the Arabs, as early as the 7th century, gradually superseded the semicircular arch between the 12th and 13th centuries, and gave to the Gothic its final touch of completeness and perfection. The high pointed gable of northern structures (adopted, as is supposed, to obtain such a slope in the roof as would prevent the accumulation of snow), was not in perfect accordance with the round top of the great east window, as will be seen by diagram A; while the form of the pointed arch, diagram B, at once brings the

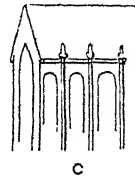


A



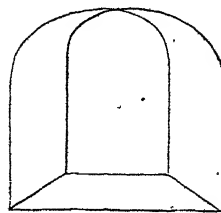
B

lines of the roof and window into harmony. This appears to have been acutely perceived by the Gothic architects; and thus we find the pointed window frequently adopted beneath the gable, while the circular form was still continued in the lateral lights, as in diagram C, where they occur beneath a nearly unbroken horizontal line.



C

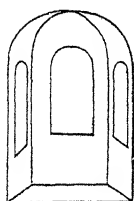
The side lights, it would appear, were eventually subjected to a similar change, to bring them into a like accordance with internal forms, the salient features of which were mainly governed by the system of vaulting, which had been adopted for the roofing of each compartment of the nave and aisles. The principle of vaulting had been known to the Romans as a means of covering in, or roofing, any square area by means of converging walls; which is but an ingenious application of the principle of the arch. The diagram below exhibits four walls converging in this manner; or rather three, the fourth being necessarily removed to exhibit the others.



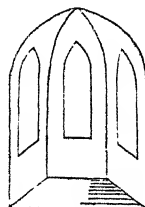
This is one of the commonest and best known principles in building, and only described here as a link in the argument.

When the Gothic architects began to raise the pitch of roofs so constructed, each compartment necessarily exhibited the *silhouette*, as the French would term it, of four pointed arches, meeting at the apex, in a common centre. So long as the vaulting was built at a very low pitch, as common in Roman structures, this feature was not strikingly obvious, but in the raised pitch of Gothic structures, the pointed character, as I have said, became remarkable, and the windows of the aisles were then made pointed, to accord with the form of the vaulting, just as the end window had previously changed its form to accord with the pointed gable.

The diagram D exhibits the low or flattened vault, with a round topped window ; and the diagram E, a higher and consequently more pointed vault, with a pointed window to correspond.



D



E

This is the most probable and self-evident theory of the introduction of the pointed arch. Though the very gradual transition of form, from the round to the pointed arch in the southern provinces of France might lead to other conclusions.

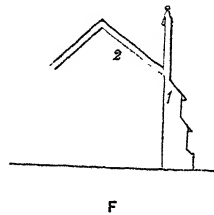
But whatever theory of the cause of the adoption of the pointed or Gothic arch may eventually prevail, it is certain that it became very general in the 13th century, and we thus see Gothic architecture, at this epoch, starting fairly on its course, with its three great elements of form and design brought into beautiful harmony; namely, the slender connecting column, the principle of vaulting and groining in a perfected form, and the pointed arch in accordance with it.

I shall not attempt to define special styles in this noble architecture of the middle ages, nor divide them into Romanesque, Norman, early English, perpendicular, Tudor, or flamboyant, &c. &c., but merely allude to a few general principles and striking features, which more or less pervade every phase of its career.

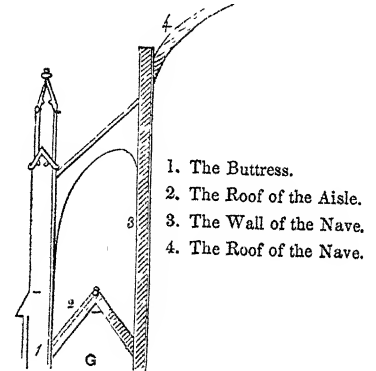
In the first place, let us consider, for a moment, all the scientific difficulties of construction, mastered by the Gothic architect; difficulties which had been called into existence by some of the new forms and arrangements of the Christian temples of the middle ages. The ancient Roman Basilica presented little difficulty to contend with in the construction of the roof, as the greater part of the central portion was no doubt open to the sky; and when the form was adopted for Christian churches, and a flat timber roof, composed of beams laid from wall to wall, was adopted, such an addition presented

no new structural difficulties to the architect, a wall of very moderate strength being sufficient for its support.

But when the Gothic architects determined, with the religious enthusiasm and energy peculiar to that animated and vigorous age, to render these Christian monuments almost indestructible by time, and to compose even the roof of stone, and that, pitched at an acute angle, the weight and thrust upon the outer walls became formidable. To meet this exigency, two of the chief features of Gothic architecture, the buttress and the pinnacle, were invented; and eventually the flying buttress, as it has been termed.



THE BUTTRESS AND PINNACLE.



THE FLYING BUTTRESS.

The diagram F shows the effect of the simple buttress (1), in resisting the thrust of the roof (2). Diagram G shows the effect of the flying buttress, in supporting the wall of the nave or choir, generally higher than the side aisles, against the thrust of its more elevated roof; the weight of the pinnacle, in both cases, assisting the buttress. This last expedient, that of the flying buttress, as it has been strikingly termed, is one of the boldest and most ingenious devices exhibited in the whole history of architectural progress, and the decorative forms which the buttress and its pinnacle were made to assume, under the adaptive hand of the Gothic architect, render them, not only excellent as a highly scientific expedient in structure, but exquisitely decorative; in fact, they were made to form one of the most picturesque and original features of the art.

The next striking feature of the style is the window. The ancient Basilica, which formed the original model of Christian architecture, was, as I have said, lighted from the roof, that is to say, after its colonnades, which were at first open, were enclosed with an external wall; but the earliest of the Christian churches appear to have been lighted from openings at the sides, in short windows; some perfectly open; while, as early as the 5th century, others, in Italy and the East, were no doubt glazed, as glass began to be extensively used for such purposes about that time. Yet, we find examples in Italy of thin slabs of transparent marble or alabaster being used in the position of glass for windows as late as the 8th century. But I do not dwell upon the nicety of precise dates, or upon especial peculiarities of particular examples. It is

sufficient for my purpose to point out that the mediæval architects early perceived that the lateral openings, or windows, occurring at regular intervals, flanked by the buttresses and their pinnacles, must necessarily become a very principal feature in church architecture. As if in aid of this view, the general introduction of glass, and the art of painting it with various devices occurred, just as Gothic architecture began to assume a special and complete character; and its uses in the decoration of the church windows were at once seized upon by the architects of the age; by whom it was framed in stone tracery of various forms, gradually increasing in elaborate and graceful design up to the end of the 15th century. This window tracery forming, as it did, the exquisitely graceful and ever-varied framing to the rich colours of the glass pictures which it enclosed, is among the most beautiful and successful developments of Gothic design, and forms one of the most fascinating features of our superb cathedrals, from the 13th to the 15th centuries.

Still more wonderful, perhaps, as pieces of Gothic design and architectural structure, are the noble towers and spires with which our mediæval temples are crowned. The campanile of Italy were but successive stories of miniature colonnades; and if they occasionally advanced somewhat towards the character of the northern Gothic, like the famous campanile of Giotto, at Florence, they are still composed of evident layers, or stories; while the Gothic steeples of Germany, Flanders, and France rise in ever-varying design towards their acuminating summit, infinite in profuse and elaborate detail, and even the minutest part forming a blended and integral portion of the whole.

The brilliant epoch of this beautiful phase of art may be placed about the end of the 14th century, when its most striking general characteristics, the angular or pointed feature, combined with the interlacing of intricate tracery, extended to every branch of fine and industrial art. The metal-worker and forger of arms and armour, the embroiderer, the leather-worker, the goldsmith, the sculptor, the painter,—all were thoroughly imbued with the peculiar genius of Gothic art. Even the writing of the period was thoroughly marked by the same angular feature; and its illuminated letters glittered with golden tracery as rich as that of the windows; so that a cathedral or a castle at that period, with all their appointments, of every class of workmanship, must have exhibited one of the grandest ensembles of artistic homogeneousness and completeness, that the history of art ever knew.*

This perfection was not the result of the drowsy, or worse, the commercial spirit in which art is practised now; it was, on the contrary, the result of deep earnestness. One can scarcely conceive, in these degenerate days of art, the enthusiasm which was exhibited in the erection of the great Gothic temples of Christendom. When Erwin of Steinbach submitted the plan of the tower of Strasbourg to the Bishop Conrad of Lichtenberg, and the prelate determined to put the vast design in execution, promising heavenly rewards to all who should assist in its structure, so great were the crowds of men, women, and children, who

* I have not room to refer to the graceful yet distinct style which marked the brief development of Gothic architecture in southern Italy or Sicily; nor the overwrought but magnificent richness, that a more truly Gothic style exhibited in Spain; nor to follow the gradual and lingering decay of Byzantine art in Russia. I can only seize the more immediate links of the last ten centuries of the development of the art, with the view of ascertaining some of the causes which have led to its present state, and may influence its future prospects.

hastened to take part in what they considered a sacred task, that the chroniclers of the period describe it as one of the most wonderful scenes of the age. When we consider also the estimation in which the great master masons were held, and their total devotion to their art—and that any artist guilty of leading an irregular life was immediately excluded from a profession and a brotherhood which was considered to partake in some degree of the sacred character which belonged to their works—we need not feel surprised at the triumph of art in that age, as compared with its decline in ours.

But the *renaissance* was at hand. Gothic exuberance of design had outdone itself, and the *flamboyant* style, as it has been termed in France and Spain, and the overlaid excess of the Tudor in England, no doubt led to the downfall of this exquisite phase of art. In contrast with the overcharged richness and the excessive multiplication of parts exhibited by Gothic architecture at the opening of the 16th century, the repose and simplicity of the remaining ruins of Greece and Rome, of the Acropolis and the Forum, became highly attractive to the artistic eye; and not only the artist but also the poet and historian of the age were fired with enthusiasm for the long neglected majesty and grandeur of classical architecture; and indeed classical art in general, for the renewed study of the poets, historians, and philosophers of Greece and Rome (so long placed without the pale of study by the overwrought zeal of the Romish clergy, as pagan and heretical) contributed not a little to the general and active admiration of all the artistic productions of the ancients, and led to that kind of retrograde step in art which had then no parallel in its history.

The intricate beauties of design and scientific niceties of construction, which Gothic art had been a thousand years in perfecting, were overthrown as it were in a moment. The clustering Gothic pillars were intermingled with Corinthian columns, and classic scrollings of bastard acanthus usurped the place of the oak, the rue, the thistle, and other national plants, which had been wrought into architectural decorations with such exquisite skill by the matchless race of Gothic carvers, so well trained to excellence by the masonic companies who had banded themselves together for the practice of their glorious art. By this introduction of classic features, all congruity of style was for a moment lost; and the grossest absurdities were practised in the attempt to introduce, per force, the Corinthian column, and massive Grecian cornice. One of the most absurd existing examples of this sudden mania is a church in Poland, in the construction of which, by bizarre conceit, the degenerate architect determined to make the Roman column supersede the buttress—a feat which he performed by placing the column at two feet distant from the wall, and connecting it only at the top by a little bridge or beam; thus placing a mere parasitic ornament at the post of the efficient buttress, and that in a way that, so far from being a support, and a counterpoise to the thrust of the roof, must have been, if anything, an extra drag and dead weight pulling at the wall, as if to assist the dangerous thrust of the roof. It was, however, notwithstanding this dereliction, an artistic age, and the first shock of the mongrel admixture over, new styles evolved themselves, which, if less scientific in construction, less intricately rich in ornamental detail, and less homogeneously complete than the pure Gothic, were yet worthy the name of art, in a high degree.

The cinque-cento style (so called from having originated in the 15th century in Italy, where this extraordinary retrograde step preceded its perpetration in France, Germany, and England) possesses extraordinary elegance; and a long list of artistic names might be cited, whose arabesque ornaments and other decorative detail, rival even Greek design in exquisite grace and purity of conception and execution. But in Italy the revolution was confined principally to decorative detail; while in France it effected more radical changes, growing rapidly out of revolution, to order; and some of the churches, chateaux, and public fountains, erected during the reigns of Francis I. and Henri II., are exquisite models of a beautiful style, originated and perfected in less than a quarter of a century.

In England, a corresponding desertion of the Gothic, and return to antique forms, produced the Elizabethan style, greatly inferior either to the *renaissance* style of France, or the cinque-cento of Italy.

All these styles eventually disappeared in a continued attempt to reproduce the Roman. Palladio in Italy, and Inigo Jones in England, and the great architects of the period in France, imitated, to a certain extent, the effect of the later Roman buildings, modified, however, to modern circumstances. At a somewhat later period, Philibert de l'Orme and others in France, and Sangallo and many more in Italy, brought the general style of architecture still nearer to what they conceived to be the classical standard.

In the meantime St. Peter's had arisen in Rome; commenced by Bramanti in the cinque-cento feeling at a time when we were still at high Gothic in the construction of Henry the Seventh's chapel at Westminster, continued by Michael Angelo, and terminated by a later race of architects, it gave rise to St. Genevieve in Paris, and St. Paul's in London; after which, the styles of the period of Queen Anne and Louis XIV. gradually lost all individual character, as they drew nearer and nearer to Roman models; the French school, however, being impressed with a feeling of considerable splendour by the facile pencil of Le Brun, and the exuberant imagination of Le Pautre.

After this period all original feeling appears entirely to cease; and the middle and latter half of the 18th century yields but a dreary blank to the artistic explorer.

But in England, towards the close of that century, another extraordinary retrograde step took place; and that time, it was to the long-deserted Gothic that the national taste reverted—a taste fostered, if not originated, by Horace Walpole and his collection at Strawberry-hill.

I have said, speaking of the age of the "Revival" as it is termed, that it was an artistic age, and that in spite of the incongruity of the materials then intermingled, two or three distinct and remarkable styles were evolved. But the close of the 18th century was not an artistic age, and the attempt to revive the Gothic at that time was a lamentable failure, as the wretched character of the repairs and additions to Windsor will sufficiently exemplify, although they were executed after some years of experience, had, in a degree, refined the wretched carpenter's Gothic of Batty Langley and his class into a somewhat more respectable style.

In France the public taste took an opposite direction. The paintings of David, and the architecture of Messrs. Percier and Fontaine, combined with the general study of

the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, given rise to by the revolution, had imparted a new impetus to classical art on the continent; and the taste called the *gout de l'Empire*, from being at its zenith during the reign of Napoleon, was the result of the movement. It was a servile but frigid and badly felt imitation of Greek and Roman detail, with no conception of the grandeur of the entire compositions. In the beginning of the present century, extended travel disclosed to our artists and their patrons the superior purity and elegance of Greek art over Roman; and the publication of various works on Grecian remains (of architecture, costume, painting, &c., together with the importation of the Elgin marbles,) led to a perfect mania for the servile imitation of Greek forms. But a similarly close imitation of the Gothic had been going on in the meantime, and great improvement made; several works of great excellence as mere reproductions having been erected; so that the confusion of taste was at its acme, one party lauding Gothic to the skies, as the only Christian architecture; another declaring the Grecian the only style founded upon the true principles of art; while a third party declared for the Elizabethan, as a "national" style. In short, the existing race of architects, in order to meet the public taste, were reduced to mere style-mongers. Originality of thought or design was out of the question; and no skill in the practice of architecture was required, beyond a sort of cleverness in galvanizing dead styles into a factitious existence; the works of bygone centuries making fearful grimaces under the operation: as the bard of the time sang, without thinking of architects, their

—— "Galvanism set some corpses grinning."

Not long after the epoch I am describing, the Houses of Parliament were burnt down, and the style-mongering came into full play. There was to be a competition for the re-building, and the competitors were (will it be believed?) confined to two "styles," the "Gothic" and the "Elizabethan."

The Gothic design, a very excellent one of its kind—the best perhaps that could be done by the artist thus nailed down to a pattern—carried the day; and we find ourselves at the present moment, positively lavishing the national millions upon the reproduction of a dead art, with all its exuberance of ornament actually outdone, in the piece of exquisite sham Gothic now in the act of perpetration. Here are all the unnatural lions, the knock-kneed saints, the bandy kings, and wry-necked queens, of the struggling art of the 15th century; for, in imitation, it is always the faults that are most successfully imitated. Nothing could be more admirable than Gothic architecture in its own age, and, as far as the knowledge of design was then developed, the details were admirably wrought; the conscientious labour, the high finish, and the beautiful conception of the whole design concealing, or at least atoning for, the anatomical errors of drawing: while the exaggerated crisping of the foliage, and the heraldic contortion of animals, so vile in modern imitation, were then full of the life and spirit of the time. Could we imagine Gothic art, hewing out its own course through its period of repletion or over richness at the end of the 15th century, and then, purified and refreshed, pursuing its course to our own time, we might behold a noble and exquisite national style, which would, strictly speaking, have been still Gothic; but how different to the Gothic now rising rampant in Westminster, the Gothic of three hundred years ago

resuscitated as it existed then, while art, science, and general civilization, have travelled so far in advance. The double return to dead forms, within the three last centuries, first to the classical, and then to the Gothic, is peculiar to modern times; for no example exists of such retrograde movements, in the whole previous range of art history.

In France and Germany a Gothic taste arose with the restoration of the Bourbons, waging a fierce war, under the name of the *Romantic* style, against the republican and imperial classicism. This feeling went on increasing, nearly to the extinction of the classical styles, till the end of the reign of Louis Philippe, which was its most brilliant epoch, when the collection of the Hotel Cluny was purchased by Government, and made public; and when the cathedral of St. Denis and the Sainte Chapelle were restored, and the chapelle at Dreux constructed; in short, when a rage for "*moyen age*" art of every description became an epidemic throughout the country. This feeling received a wholesome check during the revolution of 1848, and in England, rather unexpectedly, a similar one through the medium of the agitation against "Papal aggression;" everything connected with the church decoration of Catholic times being sweepingly condemned by the dominant party. Such appears, at present, to be the end of the age of style-mongering, copying, and every kind of servile reproduction. The advent of a better and more original and courageous feeling must be near at hand; but I must reserve what I have to say on that head for the conclusion of the architectural section of my Ten Centuries of Art.

POLYCHROME ARCHITECTURE.

The discovery, by comparatively recent students and travellers, that remains of colour were observable on the columns, friezes, cornices, &c. of Grecian temples, was received by some with incredulity; by others, with that avidity which a morbid thirst for novelty urges on to seize every opportunity of innovation. Polychrome architecture became the theme of many pens, the routine practitioners strongly condemning it, and alleging, in support of their views, that the refined and elegant Greeks could never have been guilty of such vulgar barbarism as to daub with paint the spotless purity of the Parian marble. They quoted again and again the oft-cited lines of our great poet, about "painting the lily" and "gilding refined gold;" forgetting, in their abstract theories, that our noble Gothic cathedrals still exhibited well-preserved and successful examples of a similar class of decoration, derived, no doubt, from Byzantine models, in which, in a degraded form, the architectural practices of the elder Greeks had been preserved.

Forgetting also, that the uninteresting self-coloured interiors, exhibited by many fine Gothic works as they then appeared, were produced by the ruthless whitewash of the Puritans,—those Iconoclasts of the 15th century, who hated art as much as they hated Popery.

Other writers and artists, on the contrary, thoroughly investigating the subject, produced restored models of the Parthenon and other Greek temples, in which

the original colouring was restored ; the remaining traces suggesting various modes of carrying out the pictorial decorations, according to the positions in which the different tones of ancient colour were found. Some of these experiments were quite sufficient to prove that the introduction of artificial colour and gold, even to the concealment of the beautifully delicate tone of the purest pentelic marble, was far from producing a barbaric effect, even when clumsily reproduced by modern hands, not trained, like the Greeks, to the exquisite harmony of form and proportion with which the polychrome decorations had to correspond. Suffice it to say, that the feeling in favour of colour prevailed ; which, however (so far as it was founded, as supposed, on the high authority of Greek models), may, to a great extent, have been wrong ; for it is by no means certain that the reds and supposed *blues*, of which traces exist, were of that brilliant tone adopted in modern restorations.

Among the ruins of an ancient Greek temple, on the site of the ancient Metapontum, in Magna Grecia, the Duc de Luynes discovered, during the excavations which he caused to be made, several fragments of cornice, &c., on which the ancient colouring was preserved in a perfect state ; and these colours, so far from being scarlet, or ultramarine blue, consisted only of a dull but rich clay-coloured red, and of a dull yellow approaching to buff, both sharply defined, in their respective patterns, by black, and relieved sparingly with white ; a combination which must have been sober yet grand and imposing in effect, and similar to that produced by the same combination of colour in Etruscan vases.

The temple of Metapontum presents a perfectly harmonious, and, at the same time, appropriate system of colouring, which might be termed " Natural Polychromy," as the entire surface of the structure was composed of an earthy cement, which thus received merely such colours as those which the most common species of earth suggested, as those of red, yellow, and white clay, heightened with touches of a deeper colour. I can imagine a modern brick building, carried out upon such a principle of colouring, so as to produce a very pleasing and cheerful yet sober effect. But it must be artistically done, and not confined to a few chequerings of red and black squares, which is the most extensive effort at polychrome design yet essayed by our architects and builders in brick structures.

Whether the Greek system of painting their temples has been correctly interpreted by its modern discoverers and defenders or not, we shall see that they had not courage to apply it to the exterior of any new work of importance ; the first essays in polychromic architecture in the Greek feeling being confined to interiors. This may, perhaps, be accounted for by the existence of more perfectly preserved ancient models for this application of the system ; afforded especially by the disinterred houses of Pompeii, and other Roman remains. Hence, in France, and especially in Germany, Pompeian interiors became the fashion ; and several good examples were also produced in England.

But the feeling for colour soon caused more recent (that is to say mediæval) models of polychrome effect in interiors to be sought for ; and the remains of Gothic colouring in our ancient cathedrals was diligently explored ; many being carefully restored, with as much of the ancient coloured decoration as trustworthy models could

be found for ; while modern design of a more or less suitable character supplied the remainder. Of this class of restoration, the Temple church is perhaps the most perfect specimen ; while the Gothic church at Cheadle, built and decorated after the original* design of Welby Pugin, and the interior of the House of Lords, are perhaps the best examples of entirely modern works of this class.

In Germany, the most striking example of restored Gothic Polychromy is undoubtedly the cathedral of Cologne ; and in France, the restoration of the cathedral of St. Denis, and of the Sainte Chapelle, offer similar and perhaps in some respects superior examples. But in the latter country, notwithstanding the recent rage for mediæval art, occasionally in some of its worst phases, interior decorations, in a semi-classical or "Italian" style, have been produced, to which we can offer no parallel in splendour. The exquisite chapel in the Chaussée d'Antin, the interior walls of which are entirely covered with paintings on gold grounds after the Byzantine manner, is a splendid example of the return to richly coloured interiors ; and yet after a manner not unworthy of modern art ; for the figures in those pictures are not distorted and misdrawn, in servile imitation of mediæval models, but executed with all the severe accuracy and purity of drawing, for which the best section of the French school is so justly celebrated. We have no modern work to compare to this. The interior of the church of La Madeleine is another great work of a distinct style, though the great principle of the abundant use of colour forms the basis of its internal decorations. This building was commenced during the Empire, and then intended, no doubt, to be of the severest simplicity, as far as colour is concerned ; the unspotted purity of the stone or marble remaining intact, or at most heightened with a little gilding, sparingly introduced in the capitals and most obviously inviting features. It is built upon the classic model of the Pantheon at Rome, the supposed work of Vitruvius, and like that structure has no windows, being exclusively lighted from the top ; yet not from one opening only ; for the dome of the Pantheon, with its central light, is repeated three times, giving three great lights to the roof of the nave, thus formed of three successive vaults or domes, which produce a fine and unusual effect. The structure of this monument was so often interrupted by political revolutions, that it has been but recently completed ; and in the interior decorations, the severe intentions of the original plan have been altogether superseded by the existing passion for colour. Richness and variety, both of colour and material, have, in fact, been so splendidly wrought out, that the eye, captivated by the blended richness of painting, sculpture, and gilding, scarcely perceives the peculiarities of the structure, which thus do not at first strike the casual observer.

The walls and ceilings of the Egyptian Museum in the Louvre, and some of the new apartments of the Hotel de Ville, are splendid examples of internal decoration, founded rather on the works of the period of the *renaissance* than on classical examples ; such, for instance, as Fontainebleau, the old parts of the Louvre, and the palaces of Italy, of the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries, where the profuse use of colour, in internal architecture, was never abandoned till the beginning of the 18th century, when the servile imitation of antique remains, from which of course all remains of colour had

* As original as a re-composition of various Gothic models can be.

in most cases been obliterated by time, caused a few frigid structures to be erected in what was considered to be pure classical taste.

In Germany the polychromic treatment of architecture has been in general, with a few examples of mediæval monomania, of a more classical character; and as such, for want of models, not so successful as the attempts of the French school. The palace, and the Glyptotheca and Pinacotheca of Munich, have been so sufficiently described as not to require more than a passing allusion here; and now that the first interest attaching to those interesting attempts at the restoration of a lost style of art is cooled down, and the first glitter and freshness of the works themselves faded, they may be fairly pronounced to be, to a certain extent, failures; but they have been the means of educating a numerous class of students of a high class to that branch of architectural decoration, which must eventually lead to great results; for the rising race of artists of every class is fast emancipating itself from the thralldom of fixed styles of any epoch. An original feeling in art, suited to and peculiar to the age, must evolve itself from the feeling which is inducing the students of modern art to break through, one after another, the leading-strings of authorities and precedents, and all obsolete guides and finger-posts whatsoever. In England, we have worked out the principle of mediæval polychromy in architecture with fair success; but in the classical feeling we have done little; and it is to the pupils of the great Munich school that we are at last indebted for increased activity in that direction.

Mr. Sang, and other less successful or less known artists, have been employed to decorate the ceiling of our Royal Exchange, in which the classical and especially the Pompeiian direction of their studies is evident. A similar class of designs has been introduced by artists of the same school in some of our leading club-houses and private mansions; the success of the attempts not being always satisfactory. One of the most conspicuous national attempts, at a classical style of architectural polychromy, I believe, by native artists, is to be found in the new internal decorations of the British Museum, where, if the entrance-hall is but tolerable, and the staircase infamously bad, the gallery of antiquities promises much better, and is in some particulars excellent, especially in the mass of rich red which forms the background to the statues.

But what can be said of the crude attempts at the introduction of colour on portions, or rather a single portion, of the exterior of this building—the pediment of the portico only? This small essay has surely made the pediment and its sculptured decoration a disconnected patch, quite at variance, in tone and character, with all the rest of the building, which still remains an unbroken mass of stone-colour. This patchwork, so far from being an improvement, has produced a painful discord; for, as Mr. Hay has ingeniously pleaded, there is a close analogy between architectural effect and music; and I can imagine I hear the call, “Resolve me that discord,” from the bedridden and sensitive musician, who could not rest till a person, who on leaving the room had struck a discord on the harpsichord, returned, at the repeated calls of the agonised musician, and “resolved the discord.” It is only to be resolved in the façade of the British Museum by the due distribution of colour over the whole elevation, a project which would require much more invention than the mere painting the ground of an alto-relievo blue, and leaving the figures white, with the addition of some injudicious gilding, which but increases the patchwork effect of the attempt.

The portico of St. Vincent and Paul, at Paris, which forms the leading illustration of this section, is an example of exterior colouring of Greek character of very much higher pretence, but still imperfectly carried out; inasmuch as some of the architectural members do not correspond to the high tone of colour of others. Where it is desired to make the ground of the pediment behind the statuary blue, the effect might be led up to, by painting the sunk portions of the fluted columns of the same colour; and when gold is used, in addition to the blue, it should be supported by gilding in other parts of the elevation, however sparingly introduced,—in the bases and capitals of the columns, for instance—when it would produce a very rich effect. The paintings within the portico of St. Vincent and Paul are an ingenious variation of the low reliefs in a similar position in the Parthenon; but altogether, notwithstanding great cleverness of execution, and the legitimate support afforded to the combinations of colour, by means of the rich bronze doors, the effect is yet unsatisfactory, as all *revived*, and of necessity imperfectly comprehended, systems must be.

The difficult questions raised by what is termed “taste,” in the matter of artificial colouring in external architecture, are not easy of solution, and not even of discussion within the space that I can allot to them. But the common sense of the question, as far as modern theory in art is as yet developed, would seem to stand about thus:—a white ground, whether of Parian marble, or any artificial white substance, may be coloured with a general tone of colour, or receive a painted pattern, because it is suited, by the uniform tone of its surface, to the reception of either a plain colour or a painted device. Granites and veined marbles, on the contrary, are unsuited, by the nature of their own natural colouring, to receive any artificial additions of colour, and therefore, if used at all, must be considered as already coloured, by the hand of Nature.

In polychrome structures, decorative sculpture, or statuary, must, it would seem, remain white, as modern feeling and “taste”* would be opposed to the addition of colour in these cases; the light and shade produced by the varieties of relief being deemed a sufficient effect, which colour would only tend to confuse; and yet the chilly effect of white statuary, among richly coloured architectural decorations, of which they form an integral part, must be felt as unpleasant and jarring.† It would seem, therefore, that the introduction of statuary, in artificially coloured external architecture, is unadvisable, as well as sculpture, even of a decorative character—such as foliated capitals, friezes, &c.; for it would evidently be more consistent in such cases, that the *whole* of the parts, intended to receive detailed decoration, should be painted rather than carved; the architect being confined to the production of surfaces, of greatly varied character, suited to the reception of painted ornament; some concave, some convex, some flat, some of large extent, and some being merely a delicate moulding or minute panel. By this arrangement there would be no confusion between *simulated* and *real* reliefs; and painting would play its proper part, unshackled by conflicting opinions, respecting the good or bad taste of adding colour to sculpture, whether it be of the human figure, or merely of foliage.

* It is nevertheless evident now, that the Greeks occasionally, if not always, painted the statuary, as well as the columns, mouldings, &c.

† But the solution of this problem has yet to be solved by repeated experiments.

Upon this theory it is quite evident that grand designs of highly consistent and magnificent character might be produced, which could either be treated so as to produce the severest gravity of aspect, or its very opposite, the most glittering and graceful lightness, as the object of the structure might require.

On the other hand, if sculpture is to be employed, which can itself receive no *artificial* colouring, it would seem, carrying out the same theory, that no artificial colouring should be allowed in the other portions of the composition. But still, effects of contrast in colour might be produced, by what we may term natural polychromy; that is to say, colour introduced by means of naturally coloured materials. For instance, the sculpture in the pediment of a portico might be composed of white marble, and the ground of black marble, relieved and made to associate itself with the sculpture by means of a line of white band inlaid near the edge; while some of the mouldings and the fluting of the columns might be inlaid with a few well-placed and well-proportioned lines of the black; the whole being judiciously heightened in effect by the addition of a little gilding, severely and sparingly applied.

That this theory is founded upon principles truly consonant with those sympathies of association and propriety which we call "taste," I may illustrate by reference to a cameo, the chaste and yet strongly contrasted effect of which is equally pleasing to the educated and uneducated eye. The sardonyx, or the shell cameo, please from the evidently tasteful and ingenious advantage seized by the artist to produce an agreeable and striking yet natural contrast. But if we were to paint the relief orange or green, or the ground blue or scarlet, the charm would evaporate in an instant. The sympathies, with natural association and artistic propriety, would be shocked; and even the uneducated in art would feel it, as well as the educated, though perhaps without tracing the cause to its source. The vague purple of the Portland vase, though artificial, pleases on account of its approach to the natural conditions above detailed, while the palpable light blue ground, and white reliefs of works of similar character, imitated from it by the ingenious Wedgewood, at once check the impulse to admire their beauty of execution and graceful design, by their glaringly artificial contrast. Hence it appears, that artificial colour belongs to the province of painting, and natural or innate colour to that of sculpture. In interior decorations, though not in exterior ones, it would seem that the great Italian architects of the 16th century arrived instinctively at a similar theory; for at that period they, in many instances, either abandoned altogether, in some of their richest works, the arabesque paintings of the preceding period, or produced nearly whole decorative composition, by means of painting only, as in the case of the famous apartment decorated with the story of Psyche, by the hand of Raphael, and the gallery of the Farnesi palace, by Annibale Carracci, to which, indeed, might be added Michael Angelo's ceiling of the Sistine chapel.

On the other hand, where sculpture of various character was profusely introduced, little or no artificial colour was resorted to; but the architects of the age found abundant means, in the natural polychromy I am describing, to obtain the richest conceivable combinations of colour. Of illustrations of this principle, there is no lack among the fine Italian works of the period; but while the interior of St. Peter's

offers to my recollection an example at once so magnificent, and so completely carried out, I need seek no other.

There, all is what I have termed natural polychromy; and yet the variety of colour is endless. The blue is lapis-lazuli; the violet, marble of Africa; the orange and yellow, are from the quarries of Sienna; the green is the antique Serpentino; the red, the famed *rosso-antico*; the white, the stainless stone of Carrara. All these various materials, under the skilful hands of the great race of architects, who successively spent their lives on this vast monument, gravely dispose themselves into glorious masses of light and dark, of warm and cool, of rich and sober, every mass endlessly yet unobtrusively enriched with exquisite details, formed either by sculpture in relief or inlaid designs; the whole blended into one harmonious whole, by the pervading yet subdued glitter of the profuse gilding. All this gorgeous richness of effect is yet at the same time chaste and pure, because the spectator feels there is no sham, no artificial dye or colour; like the cameo, its contrasts and its colours appear innate, and have those intimate associations with each other, that cast an atmosphere of reality and propriety over all, such as the artificial can rarely attain to.

But, says the caviller, there are the pictures. No, they are no longer pictures; there is nothing of perishable canvas within the walls of St. Peter's; the pictures have been transmuted to stone. In the ateliers of the Vatican, the masterpieces of Italy's great painters have been, as it were, by some magical alchemy, wrought into imperishable stone, for the decoration of Italy's greatest temple; and those results of the admirable skill of the Mosaic workers, are truly astonishing results of reproductive art. They are, in perfection and execution, superior to the finest Mosaics of antiquity; so perfect, in fact, that a stranger might walk through St. Peter's, and admire its gallery of pictures, without perceiving that they had become stone, or that they formed an integral part of those vast walls, as imperishable as the building itself.

From this and other examples I come to the conclusion, finally, that *artificial* polychromy must be confined to painting in its decorative features, while *natural* polychromy must be confined to sculpture.

In colouring the various materials used in architecture, both of a monumental character, and in ordinary building, it would seem that the colours may nearly always be arbitrary, and at the taste of the architect or decorator. Iron, for instance, from being of uniform colour, may fitly receive either an unvaried coating of some arbitrary tone, or a pattern of suitable design, of any colour; but in the case of iron I should prefer a violet tone, such as steel assumes at a certain heat, varied by a dull orange, such as is produced by rust, either or both relieved with white, such colours being naturally associated with the idea of iron; and I cannot help fancying that those tones would have produced a better effect in the iron-work of the Crystal Palace, than the undecided and somewhat leaden blue and subdued yellow which have been employed.

Copper might be coloured with its own soft red tone, relieved with masses, or tracery of light verdigris green heightened with black; and so of the artificial colouring of other substances. This is perhaps a somewhat fanciful theory; and a perfectly arbitrary choice of colour might supersede it, if any special advantage were in view.

The artificial colouring of all colourless plaster, or all compounded materials, such as lime, cement work, &c., may of course be completely arbitrary; as the compost is a mixture on which no immediate associations can fix; though I have said, in speaking of the temples at Metapontum, that well-known earthy colours, like those of the red, yellow, and white clays, heightened with black, have an agreeable affinity with such structures as we perceive to be formed of manipulated earths. The one thing to avoid in colouring or painting such substances, and indeed any other, is positive *imitation* of another natural substance, such as granite, rare marble, &c., which, as a sort of "sham," is always repulsive to the eye of pure and cultivated taste; while a system of decorating buildings so composed, by means, either of perfectly arbitrary colours, or colours associated with the nature of the material, appear a consistent, indeed indispensable portion of their artistic manipulation. In concluding this attempt to describe portions of the past progress and the future prospects of architecture, I must allude again to its chances of progressive *originality*.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

I have made some few remarks on the influence likely to be produced by the prominent position in which the purpose of the *soi-disant* "Crystal Palace" has placed structures composed of glass and iron. The conservatory at Kew, that at Sion-house, that at Chatsworth, or the one in the Regent's-park, all predecessors to the Crystal Palace, exhibited, equally well as the last-named structure, all that has yet been done with iron and glass. At the time the duty was taken off that material, writings innumerable, by persons interested in the progress of the arts of civilization, especially domestic architecture, eloquently advocated glass roofs, &c., accompanying their writings by designs and suggestions of a various and occasionally original character; but all these things fell flatly upon the public attention, which could only be roused by some such event as the international exhibition. The building made to contain the great show of the whole world's industry, though differing in no essential point from the well-known structures above enumerated, except in dimensions, became, to the general public, a striking novelty, which the name of the Crystal Palace tended, in no slight degree, to impress upon the public mind. It became an excellent and conspicuous advertisement for the iron and glass principle of building; and thus, as being the means of weaning the ever-conservative feelings of national taste from old prejudices, or sluggish inattention, to new paths of improvement, has created a great good; and now, when public attention is all curious to see the Crystal Palace principle applied to all classes of buildings, let us briefly consider to what architectural modifications it might lead, if followed out.

One of the first, occurring to the speculative architect, would be that caused by the fact that light being admitted through all parts of the surface of such a building, no special windows would be required; thus entirely altering the whole physiognomy of any structure, carried out upon the principle of the Crystal Palace, and leading inevitably to new combinations of form, and entirely new effects. But

these new architectural features (which might become very beautiful if carefully developed by truly artistic minds, sensitively alive to properties and peculiarities of the new materials they might have to deal with) must clearly be confined to a small class of buildings of special character, such as public galleries, and buildings of that character, as in domestic dwellings, and even public offices, privacy is as much a requirement as shelter; and one cannot imagine, without a shudder of sympathetic discomfort, the situation of a family sleeping, dressing, eating, &c., within the translucent and fragile walls of a crystal home; or a staff of post-office or banking clerks curiously exhibited at work, like bees in a glass hive, should crystal post-offices and banks be constructed.

Nevertheless, the great extension of the use of iron, glass, and other artificial materials, is much to be desired; and although their use in the Crystal Palace has not suggested to its constructors any new principles of importance, beyond what had been previously developed in the Kew conservatory, and other similar structures; yet the very fact of putting a glass-house to some other use than the protection of delicate plants, is itself an innovation which must lead to many more.

In the next effort, to which the crude first essay will necessarily lead, we shall doubtless have some attempt at decorative design in the vertical and other supports, in which, appropriate ornament will grow out of the special functions of each member of the structure, which, in a new material, must inevitably lead to new combinations of lines; especially to the introduction of tracery of light and graceful character, delicately framing the transparent crystal, and charming the eye by a thousand playful variations of exquisite form, such as the properties of the materials so naturally suggest.

But beyond a crude combination of iron and glass alone, I conceive that other new materials must lend their aid, which, possessing requisite qualities, will supply the wants so keenly felt in the first imperfect attempts. I allude more especially to a combination of glazed earthenware with glass, by which means we shall obtain a due proportion of opaque substance in both wall and roof; while the glassy surface of the porcelain will harmonize most homogeneously with the glass itself. These will form, as it were, an exquisitely tinted clothing to the iron skeleton; and by this combination we shall possess all the old requirements of domestic dwellings, with many new advantages.

In the first place, in our coal burning towns, our houses will present a surface to the atmosphere, to which the sooty deposits, so disfiguring our present architecture, will not adhere. In the second place, no triennial coating of new paint will be required, as the fresh and delicate tints of the vitrified surface will not injure by time, but will endure as long as the building lasts. In the third place, the most highly wrought effects of polychrome architecture may be attained in a most exquisite and appropriate manner, the rich designs of which will not be liable to perish like the exterior frescoes of the palaces of Italy, but be as enduring as the china tower of Nankin, or the elaborate porcelain tombs of Hindoostan; for the building of houses of crockery is no new-fangled idea, and their durability has been well tested by the monuments above alluded to, which have defied the ravages of centuries.

The crude attempts at the use of Dutch and other glazed tiles in the exterior of buildings, bears no analogy either to the style of the ancient monuments I have

named, or to the style in which I conceive porcelain may be used in modern buildings; for I am imagining not a mere parasitic casing, but a design carried out, *ab ovo*, with reference to the especial qualities of the new material, which should be adapted, in form and density, in a totally new and appropriate manner to its new purpose. I can conceive a sparkling and brilliant, yet massive and durable, style of architecture growing out of the proper use of these materials, to which the history of the art can afford no parallel, the pictorial decorations of which, burnt in beneath the glaze, would be a part of the wall itself; and they might be made as elaborately rich, or as chastely simple, as desired, according to the destination of the building.

I had in preparation several large designs of the character suggested above, for the Exhibition of 1851; but the definitive notice of the impossibility of their admittance, after the 31st of March, compelled me to abandon them for that time.

The last point I shall allude to, as an advantage which ought to be made to grow out of the use of new materials (indeed it ought to have done so out of the old ones), is the more complete and permanent structure of roofs.

The Greeks, in their most perfect temples, constructed the exterior of the roof of marble, the effect of which was as carefully studied in its general form and ornamental detail as any other part of the building,—quite as much so as the columns and their entablature, to which most of the antiquarian studies of modern architects have been principally confined.

The Romans, in the best period of their artistic development, roofed the more conspicuous public buildings with bronze, which was frequently gilt, and was of a character as permanent as the rest of the building. But with the decline of classical architecture the true character of the roof, really the most important part of a building, as mainly affording that shelter, to obtain which the whole building was erected, was lost sight of; and though we find the Gothic architects constructing vaulted roofs, in the designs of which they displayed perhaps the highest structural science of which the history of art affords any example; yet, the exterior of the same roof, instead of being so designed as to harmonize with the rest of the building, was simply a rude covering of sheet lead, or glazed tiles; and examples of the latter may be still seen in some of the churches of Naples.

But though mediæval monuments do not exhibit, in the exterior of their roofs, those characters of evident permanence, or of homogeneous accordance with the structural character of the rest of the building, yet they were ever ornamental. A rich fringing of pierced metal work generally crested the highest ridge; and elaborately designed vanes, or ornamental pinnacles of similar character to the cresting, rose in many quaint spiral forms from the angles. This was the case also in private dwellings; though the vane was not used upon the roof of houses inhabited by persons below the rank of a knight, as it indicated the right of the lord of the dwelling to bear a banner.

Gradually, however, though inexplicably, the feeling of decorating the roof gave way. even in superior buildings and public monuments; parapets ornamented with balustrades, &c., being adopted to conceal the nakedness and poverty of the crown of the building.

One can hardly conceive a skilful architect, commissioned to construct a palace for some wealthy person, making use of the most permanent materials in the walls and in the interior, and ornamenting them with every refinement within the reach

of lavish expenditure; and yet, in the roof, the crowning completion of his structure—that portion which has most to contend with in its contact with heat, cold, rain, and snow—being contented with a few timber scantlings, slightly boarded, upon which are nailed some little squares of slate or tile till the whole is covered in. This wretched piece of patchwork, so unworthy of the high name of architecture, the constructor partially conceals, it is true, with a high parapet, or some other shabby device; but concealment is a poor contrivance, and in this instance something worse.

It appears to me that the exterior of the roof is not only not to be slighted, but to be designed and constructed with greater care, greater beauty, and greater permanence, both as to material and structure, than any other portion of the building, of which it should be the crowning ornament, as much as the capital is of the column.

But it is its permanence, both of appearance and real character, that I most strongly urge, as one of the principles in architectural design likely to lead to more striking and magnificent as well as more beneficial innovations, than any other reform. I trust, at all events, that mere routine architecture, as I have before said in this article, has nearly had its day;—and it is high time; for voices, though few, have been long raised against it. I myself, fifteen years ago, in an article in “*Loudon’s Architectural Magazine*,” advocated strongly those views of architectural progress, which are in favour of working out a national and original style, imbued with the true artistic spirit of the age; and I then alluded to a more copious use of glass and iron, as likely, if employed with a true understanding of their qualities as building materials, to lead to originality of a striking character, taking care neither to make iron simulate the proportions of stone, (as the Greeks had made stone wear the costume of wood); nor to make glass play the part, when associated with iron, which it did when associated with stone or brick. Many of the aspirations I then conceived have since been realized in the construction of our noble railway stations; with their far-stretching roofs, so strong and yet so slight; and their slender columns, so taper, and yet, as iron, so all-sufficient for their purpose. The Crystal Palace too; as I have said, has marked an advance in the right direction, and though it does not exhibit the amount of artistic design, which might have been attained without increasing the expense; and although it has been called “a vast cucumber frame,” and although Mr. Owen Jones’s blue and yellow columns have been called “barber’s poles,” yet, the whole is so highly satisfactory, as being excellently adapted to its special purpose—a necessarily ephemeral one—that its success has been complete, in spite of cavils. But its real merits are jeopardized by the injudicious excitement of its producers and their friends, who, if they succeed in establishing it permanently, as one of the monuments of this metropolis, will assuredly bring down upon it such criticism, as would be out of place if applied to the ephemeral palace of a season, and from which it is now shielded by the triumphant success of the international exhibition, but which would assuredly, and justly, handle it very severely as a permanent building. Against such an intention I would protest, even if I stood alone, whether it were for the purpose of a winter garden or a statue gallery, or for an occasional exhibition room, or any other purpose. First, on the grounds just stated; and secondly, because we are too great a nation to purchase our luxuries second-hand. If

we want a winter garden, we can surely afford to build one,—and a splendid one too,—a structure specially designed for the purpose, and with a view to permanence. We surely can get a winter garden without purchasing a cast-off exhibition building; and if we want a better public gallery of art than we possess, we surely can afford to build that too, and not allow ourselves to be persuaded that we had better buy a thing to make a national gallery of which has already served another turn.

But to return to glass and iron. All innovations, successful or not, are good signs; and surely with such a view we cannot have much more measuring out of Ionic, or Doric, or Corinthian by the yard, when a new metropolitan monument is required; the architect merely directing his clerk to make out a neat drawing of a portico of so many columns, Doric or Ionic, *au choix*, with lateral extensions or wings to match; such as I could point out in an important metropolitan monument of recent date, one so recent as not yet to be completed. Surely we cannot witness the erection of many more “castellated” mansions, made up of a gateway from Battle-abbey, a series of windows from Haddon-hall, and other pretty fragments from some well-known Gothic abbey, or Tudor manor-house; the whole patchwork so neatly “fine-drawn,” as not to show the seams. No; a better spirit of design is abroad; a more original feeling is arising; and old forms and principles will be gradually superseded by new ones, arising out of the genius, the feelings, the habits, the science, and the special form of civilization of the present age.

But the transition must be gentle—must be well felt—must arise out of the capabilities of the materials, and the character and purpose of the structure; both of which will present continually new themes for the inventive and adaptive genius of the coming race of architects.

We must have no rush at supposed originality, by merely abruptly changing superficial forms, like the Court architect, in a recent reign, who composed what he termed a “new order,” dubbing it “The Georgian,” as distinct from the Corinthian, inasmuch as the ostrich feathers of the royal crest were substituted for the acanthus leaves of the Grecian capital. Such puerile innovations, however, had their day; but a new style must now be born in spirit as well as in form. Its principle of construction must arise gradually, out of the nature of its materials; and its decorations, out of the form of its structure, and its purpose; and thus true originality will be attained; for it must be borne in mind that a new style is not invented like a new watch-spring, or a new method of cutting envelopes. No; a new style in art is not invented, it grows! yet not spontaneously; it requires sedulous and continual culture; its soil, is progressive civilization, and its stimulants, are ever-renewed applications of human genius, diluted with sound common sense, and applied, not only with untiring industry, but with enthusiasm, with devotion, with love—yes, love especially. “Love,” as Emmerson has beautifully said, “is our highest word;” and, with reference to art, it is indeed the Promethean spark which gives it vitality—

‘Ah, how skilful grows the hand,
That obeyeth Love’s command;
It is the heart and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain.”—LONGFELLOW.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

SCULPTURE.

SCULPTURE holds a higher place among the fine arts than Architecture, because its origin and development are founded upon moral or intellectual wants, rather than physical ones. Architecture originated in providing man with his dwelling, his shelter, thus appealing first to mere material wants ; while sculpture, starts from higher ground, and only appeals to the imagination—and to that portion of it, the spiritual perception of the beautiful, the cultivation of which, is one of the highest duties of civilization.

Sculpture ranks above painting also, because its highest qualities partake more of the ideal ; it is confined to the domain of form alone,* in which it reaches the highest attainments of art, without the aids of colour or perspective ; and, above all, supports the gaze of the scrutinizing eye of criticism from every side, instead of merely presenting a single aspect to the spectator, like a picture.

From these causes, and others, the development of purely ideal beauty, and the most perfect symmetry of form, have been sought and developed to a greater extent in sculpture than in the sister arts. Its origin, too, has been higher ; for while the first works of the first architect must have been, as I have said, the hut which was to be his dwelling, and painting, according to the graceful Grecian fable, is said to have originated in the attempt to reproduce the positive features of a particular individual, by marking permanently the outline of a shadow, cast by the light of a lamp upon the wall,—sculpture, on the other hand, arose neither by providing for a material want, nor by a servile imitation of the features of a particular individual ; but from the attempt to idealize the form of a deity—to create an object, which should symbolize in material form the character of a superior being. The first attempt may have occurred first, in Egypt, or in Central Asia ; but the earliest steps in art are similar in all countries, without the necessity of supposing any communication between them. To Greek sculpture alone I shall therefore look for examples, for its infant steps, as its after development, was more splendid in Greece than in any other region, and the noble works of Grecian artists remain still unrivalled. The first attempts were, in Greece

* I shall only be able to glance in another place at Torrentic and coloured sculpture, the Chryselephantine works, &c. &c.

as elsewhere, of the rudest and most simple character; yet, in its rudeness and simplicity the infancy of Grecian art was never grotesque. The noble organization of this peculiar race appears to have prevented them from producing such hideous conceptions, even in their first attempts, as the earliest idols of the Chinese, or of those savage races not discovered till modern times. Yet the beginnings were rude. The earliest known representations of the gods were simply a column of wood, of about the height of a human being; the most ancient statues of the twin Dioscuri, as recorded by Greek writers, being two such wooden columns, joined together by a connecting bar of the same material.

That such was really the origin of that school of sculpture, carried to such perfection by later artists, is a fact curiously borne out by the Greek word *κίον*, which expresses equally a column or a statue. These wooden statues, or rather symbols of deities, were made of peculiar woods; thus, the statues of Dionysius, the Greek Bacchus, who was also god of figs, were made of the wood of the fig tree; and other woods were adopted for other statues through similar associations. The veneration in which these rude works of wood were held, caused later sculptors, even when the art was fully developed, to continue the ancient practice, and many fine statues in wood existed in the time of Pausanias.

A similar practice existed in other countries deriving their civilization directly or indirectly from Greece; and we learn from a passage in Cicero, that such was the early practice in Rome, for he states that the ancient statues of Romulus and of Numa, preserved in the capitol, were of wood.

It may easily be conceived that an attempt to develop the form of the head as the seat of mind and of expression, should precede any attempt to reproduce the entire figure, in the form of a perfect statue; and, in fact, it was the upper part of the column of wood alone, which received the first truly sculptural development; and the form thus appearing, that of a head surmounting a simple and unwrought trunk, no doubt suggested the later Hermes, which continued to be executed long after perfect statues had been executed by skilful artists. The feet were next added; and in the struggle to execute these sculptured portions with increasing perfection, they were occasionally made of stone, while the trunk remained of wood. Slight hollows scooped in the trunk, next suggested the proportions of the legs and arms, and by degrees they became more and more perfectly executed, till, like a similar phase of art in Egypt, where it became finally permanent, those members were perfectly executed, in a certain stiff manner, while they yet remained attached to the trunk.

So great was the effect produced by the next step in art, or rather series of steps, which eventually detached the arms and legs from their adhesion through their whole length to the trunk, that this great advance was assigned by the imaginative Greeks to a superior being, possessed of more than ordinary powers, whom they personified under the name of Dædalus; who is said to have been the first to give "a life-like effect to statues;" a passage which no doubt refers to the great improvement effected, by detaching and giving the effect of action to the arms and legs.

The existence of this imaginary personage, called Dædalus, is assigned to the age of Theseus; and the inventions attributed to him, are both artistic and

mechanical; as he is said to have invented wings of wood, fastened on with wax, with which he escaped from the persecutions of Minos in Crete; while his son Icarus, whom he had similarly furnished, flying too near the sun, melted the wax, and fell into that part of the Ægean sea which is called after him, the Icarian.

Such was the mode in which the Greeks testified their admiration of the progress of art, by concentrating the successive advances of several generations of sculptors in the person of one superhuman individual, whom they marked as a secondary divinity. It is possible, however, that a real Dædalus actually existed, and practised the art of sculpture, making, probably, great improvements, though not concentrating within his own career, and perfecting at one leap all that is fabulously attributed to him; and the existence of a true Dædalus is rendered the more probable, as art, or rather its profession, was then hereditary; and Socrates, the great philosopher, but wretched sculptor, claimed to be a Dædal, by hereditary descent. Pausanias mentions several wooden statues by Dædalus, as existing in his time.

The next step in Grecian sculpture may be generally illustrated by those works discovered among the ruins of Ægina, which, although they display well conceived dramatic action in the limbs, have yet nearly all the stiffness of the Egyptian style. The neat execution, and formal draperies of this period of Grecian art, accord in effect with what was once generally known as the Etruscan style, but which now receives the name of archaic, though that term, founded on the Greek word *αρχαῖος*, (*old*), would equally well apply to any ancient and imperfect style.

It is most probable, as I have stated, that the art of sculpture originated and developed itself independently in Egypt, Asia, and all south western and southern Europe, much after the same manner as I have described it to have done in Greece. But while in Egypt it attained to a certain point, and then remained stationary, in Persia and Assyria it advanced beyond that period, and we find in the recently disinterred sculptures of Khorsabad and Nimroud, certain characters, especially the exaggerated expression of the muscles of the legs and arms, which no doubt afforded the Greeks and Macedonians the first hint, for that style which is expressed on a small scale in the types of coins attributed to Lete, and to some of the earliest princes of the Macedonian monarchy, before the neat archaic style of Ægina had fully developed itself. This latter has been termed the hieratic style, as used principally under the supervision of the priesthood for the decoration of temples. Many works executed under hieratic influence were accurate copies of former statues, the very defects of which had become sanctified by age and antique worship, and it was not till more popular subjects began to be treated, that the art made great strides towards perfection.

By the hand of Phidias sculpture was carried to the highest pitch, which was indeed a point of grandeur never afterwards reached, although the art became more generally practised, and in more popular forms, and although a noble series of illustrious names succeeded that of the great friend of Pericles in the history of Grecian sculpture. Although the works of Praxiteles, the possible author of the matchless Venus; Lysippus, who alone was permitted the privilege of producing portraits of Alexander; of Scopas, the author of many works of world-wide celebrity,

and the productions of many other artists, were some of them superior in execution and finish, and a species of refined grace; yet the great Phidias remained the Michael Angelo of Grecian art, unapproached in a certain sublimity of conception and breadth of treatment which were entirely his own; and which we may still admire in the wonderful metopes of the Parthenon, and other magnificent fragments in our great Museum.

It may be said of the Greek school of sculpture in general, that the realization of an ideal beauty was carried by these great artists to a higher pitch than it has ever since attained; the solemn grandeur of omnipotence was expressed in the Greek conception of the form of Jupiter, in such majesty as defies approach; the highest ideal grace and youthful symmetry and beauty in the form of man, was attained in the matchless realization of the Apollo, while the most perfect loveliness of idealized beauty is the female form shone forth, "as if it gave out a light," in the marble which Grecian hands had shaped to personify the goddess of love.

But I pass rapidly over the excellent phases in which Grecian sculpture displayed various classes of beauty, after its zenith in Athens, in the time of Pericles, and its wonderful extension and popularization after the conquests of Alexander the Great, and under the Greek princes of Syria and Egypt, till the subjection of these regions to the power of Rome.

I must however state, *en passant*, that the most marked characteristic of Greek sculpture, after the conquests of Alexander, when great schools of art arose at Seleucia, Pergamus, Ephesus, Alexandria, &c., was the more abundant production of portrait statues of princes, often in the character, and with the attributes of gods. It is to this period also, that most of the purely poetical, or descriptive subjects may be assigned, and many important groups, such as that of the Laocoon, and that of the Farnesian Bull, a still larger composition, now existing in the Neapolitan collection.

Still more extensive groups are mentioned by ancient authors, such as those representing the great victories of Attalus and Eumenes over the Gauls, which, if the conjecture be correct, that the famous "dying gladiator" of the vatican is a Gaul belonging to one of these groups, must have been of the very highest excellence. The fighting gladiator of the Borghesi collection, now in the Louvre, is also supposed to have formed part of a battle scene of a similar class. Poetical subjects of a popular character were at this time multiplied to a vast extent for galleries of the wealthy; while the statues of the gods were no longer original designs, as in the earlier phases of the art, but were confined to reproductions of forms now rendered sacred by antique worship; and works of the archaic period even were reproduced with a degree of elegance, which greatly puzzled our earlier archaologists, who imagined these to be really works of the archaic period.

I have been unable in the present space to trace the first dawnings of Greek sculpture of a popular character on the early coinage, or to suggest that the group of the centaur carrying off a female, on the money of Lete, may have been the distant prototype of the metopes of the Parthenon. I at once hurry on to the sculpture of the Romans, which must be dismissed with brief notice. At the foundation of the empire by Augustus, the Romans appear to have been thoroughly imbued with

profound admiration of the arts of newly subjugated Greece, Sicily, and other countries more advanced in art than themselves. Greek artists flocked to Rome, to bask in the sunshine of the new centre of the Empire; and works executed during the reigns of the first Cæsars, almost equal the finest monuments of Greece. Native artists appear also to have been formed under the tuition of the Greeks, and to have established a school distinctly Roman. Pliny mentions the names of several eminent sculptors, who were Roman citizens, and the originality of the school so formed, is further proved by the execution of the Roman coinage of that period, which bears a character perfectly distinct from Greek monuments of the same class, and in some respects claims a sort of superiority over them. In alto and basso rilievo, the Romans attained also to great excellence in a style peculiarly their own. But the arts of the great Empire decayed with its political prosperity, and at the fall of its western portion beneath repeated barbaric invasions, sculpture had sunk into a mere adjunct of architecture; and in that character, was of the most debased description of art.

Sufficient, however, remained to form a spark from which a new school was to be ignited; and with the aid of somewhat better models occasionally finding their way from Constantinople, in the form of reliquaries decorated with miniature reliefs, modern sculpture shaped out its rude beginnings.

MODERN SCULPTURE.

It is now that we begin to examine those works which serve to illustrate the last ten centuries of artistic progress. England, after its desertion by Rome, exhibits a dreary blank of several centuries, as far as art is concerned—the only artistic productions being the curious illuminated gospels of the 6th, 7th, and 8th centuries, which display a quaint and original style of elaborate ornamentation peculiar to themselves. In sculpture, however, nothing exists to mark the art of those periods. In France, on the other hand, some fragments of sculpture remain of what may be termed a Gallo-Roman style; the interest of which, as a link in the history of art, has been pointed out by recent archæologists. This kind of debased Roman art is found principally developed in alto-relievos over the doorways and other portions of the church architecture of the period.

But it is from about the period of Charlemagne that our ten centuries of art must commence their progress, and about that epoch may be said to originate the truly distinct feeling in art which separates ancient and modern sculpture into two utterly distinct schools.

The debased Byzantine feeling in sculpture, which found its way through the eastern countries of Europe to France and England at this period, strongly tinges the character of the art both in France and even England at that time; and exercised more or less influence till the 12th or 13th centuries, when it was effaced by the then rapidly rising originality of the arts of Western Europe. The works of sculpture of the period comprised between the 9th and 13th centuries, are exclusively of an

ecclesiastical character, and consist almost entirely of alto-relievos, representing different passages in the life of Christ, more or less symbolically treated, and figures of the Apostles, Evangelists, &c., after the same style. Though, in some cases, it is supposed that such sculptures occasionally represent chronologically arranged series of princes, as Mr. Cockerel has attempted to show in the supposed range of Saxon kings on the façade at Wells, so interestingly described in his "Iconography of Wells Cathedral." But a more genuine and better authenticated class of iconographic sculpture began to appear in the sepulchral monuments, on which the effigies of the first crusaders are sculptured with admirable fidelity of individual character; their chain mail, their massive swords, and their "crossed" legs, expressing so vividly the energy and the fanaticism of the age.

Recumbent figures on sepulchral monuments may be traced back to Roman art, many sarcophagi of the later Roman periods having figures of that class on the lids. But they are generally slightly raised on one arm, as in the act of speaking to, or looking towards the spectator.

Etruscan monuments of a similar character exist of a still earlier period, and frequently in miniature, the precise intention of which is difficult to determine. Whether the modern monuments were immediately derived from these, as is most probable, some Gallo-Roman examples appearing to furnish the connecting link, is impossible to determine with certainty, or whether the idea was derived more directly from Constantinople, it is sufficient to note that the Gothic treatment appears more poetic and felicitous, as the personages are represented in perfect repose, as sleeping, which produces that solemn stillness of effect so beautifully in keeping with the quiet and sanctity of the Gothic aisles, in which their tenants repose.

From the 13th to the 15th centuries, the art of sculpture was still confined to the alto-relievo, and semi-detached statuary on the exterior of the great Gothic cathedrals, and to the sepulchral monuments within. In the 14th century the latter attained the highest excellence in the truly Gothic phase of the art, to which every link of progress for nearly two centuries exhibits some new and exquisitely worked-out features of ornament or general structure, till, at the close of the 15th century, the richness and beauty of these works, combining the skill of the ornamentalist, the architect, and the sculptor, attained the culminating point of excellence.

The figures, as in the earlier periods, were still recumbent; and the arms generally joined over the breast, with the hands palm to palm, raised piously in prayer; characteristics alike predominating in the tombs of nobles, prelates, or princes; while above, rich canopies of fretted stone suspended their elaborate tracery, often of most exquisite design, and wrought with a patient and persevering labour and high finish, which is one of the most beautiful characteristics of the art of the period, when life must have been sacrificed on its altar regardless of any guerdon or reward beyond the excellence of the work, which would seem to have been the artist's only recompense, and beyond the artistic love of which he looked not.

Up to this epoch, sculpture may be said to have been confined to such works as just described: No subjects of a popular character having appeared, the temple and the tomb absorbed the art of those ages, and imparted to them a sombre grandeur or

sedate grace, which, in the more poetical and popular works of the later epochs of the art, were gradually superseded by a more worldly tone, and a lighter character.

The 16th and 17th centuries saw the extinction of Gothic sculpture as well as Gothic architecture, and beheld the rise in their places of a new school of art, partly founded on ancient Roman models; yet the sepulchral monuments lost none of their elaboration, though it appeared in another feeling. In fact, elaborate richness in these monuments was even increased both in material and workmanship. A single figure, with its canopy, was no longer deemed sufficient; and the prodigality of wealth, which in former centuries had been spent in the erection of cathedrals, was now lavished upon a single tomb. Groups of attendant statues stood around, as it were guarding the "mighty dead," as in the magnificent tomb of Maximilian, at Inspruck; or supporting the elaborately enriched slab upon which the recumbent statues of the dead lie in their robes of state; a second slab in the shade beneath the upper one, showing the same bodies, stripped of their earthly trappings, and exhibiting the first dark traces of "death's effacing finger," wrought with fearful reality, as in the tomb of Louis XII. at St. Denis. The tomb of Francis I. at the same place, of Ferdinand and Isabella in Spain, the tomb of Henry VII. at Westminster, by the hand of an Italian sculptor, and many fine works in other capitals of Europe, exhibit a similar style of splendour, which died out at the close of the 17th century. Of the last portion of this period, the tombs of the Popes in St. Peter's at Rome, form the most magnificent series of examples, composed of a combination of rich marbles, bronze, and gilding, which have been wrought into wonderfully homogeneous compositions of unique splendour, by the Italian artists of the period.

The works of Cicognara and d'Agincourt exhibit an interesting series of the sepulchral monuments of Italy, which in their peculiar phase of Gothic, and afterwards in their matchless cinque-cento period, make a most beautiful series of examples of art progress.

I have extended my brief remarks upon sepulchral monuments beyond the close of the 15th century, in order to dispose finally of that branch of my subject, and must now retrace my steps to the close of the 15th century, at which period modern sculpture of a popular character may be said to commence.

Popular sculpture,—the sculpture of romance, of poetry, and of history,—only began to put forth its first tender shoots as the influence of hieratic or rather ecclesiastical sculpture decayed.

It was in Italy that sculpture of a character distinct from that of the church first appeared. The discovery of the classical works of antiquity, turned up from time to time, began to be appreciated as early as the first half of the 15th century, and its study led to the production of works of a somewhat similar character. Tendencies towards the cultivation of sculpture, as something more than a decorative adjunct of architecture, commenced in Italy as early as the 12th century, and it is most probable that its first steps were made at Pisa, where Bonano, a native Italian, cast the bronze doors of the Duomo, as early as the year 1180, A.D. The sculptures of the arch of San Dominica, at Bologna, and the fine sculpture of some public buildings at Sienna. Andrea de Pisa became the father of Florentine sculpture, among

whose works are the relievos of the famous Campanile. Previously to these a few public fountains had been erected in Italy, richly adorned with sculpture in a manner denoting a popular feeling for the art, and the same may be said of Germany, where some of the admirable Gothic fountains of the 14th and 15th centuries still remain.

At the close of the 14th century the competition opened at Florence, for the execution of the gates of the Baptistry marks the first epoch of positively popular sculpture in Italy. Donatelli, the cotemporary of Ghiberti, was among the earliest modern sculptors who successfully treated detached statues, of which, the famous group at Florence, treated after the antique manner, without drapery, has served as a type of so many more recent and less excellent works. His celebrity caused him to be employed by the Venetian Senate, to erect at Padua an equestrian statue of bronze to Gattamelata, general of the Venetian armies. This work was so admired by the Paduans that he was created a citizen of the place.

Thus, in the early part of the 15th century, we see sculpture revived in Italy as a popular art, and its great professors called upon to commemorate great national events by means of Iconic statues. Donatelli was perhaps the most extraordinary genius that the modern school of Italian sculpture has produced. He was the first to throw off the conventional stiffness of Gothic art, and idealize rather than servilely copy the fine forms of nature. He preceded Michael Angelo by the average length of a life; and yet his best works approach nearer to the graceful simplicity of antique art than even those of the great Buonarrotti; he had also all the merit of reviving the idealized treatment of natural forms, and if, in a certain sublime grandeur and daring, he was surpassed by his celebrated successor in correctness, certainly in finish, he was not equalled.

But we now see sculpture fairly re-established in Europe as a popular art. Michael Angelo, in his Bacchus and other single statues, nearly equalled the finest Greek models. Jean of Bologna raised his noble and characteristic statue of Cosmo de Medici; Cellini cast his beautiful Perseus, now in the Loggia at Florence, and numerous other works of similar character were executed by excellent though less known architects before the close of the 15th century.

The opening of the 16th century saw the sculptors of Italy in demand all over Europe,—at the court of Charles V. at Vienna, at Madrid, at the court of Francis I. of France, and at the courts of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. of England. But among those countries it was only in France that native sculptors arose at that period, where Cousin, Pilon, and Goujon, emulating the excellency of the revived Florentine school, gave to their works a national character truly French, which Goujon carried to the highest perfection in the reign of Henri II.—the statue of the celebrated Diana of Poitiers, the tribune of Louvre, and the fountain of the Innocents being real masterpieces of art, independent of any time or school. The correctness of outline and proportion, the sweetness of expression, the occasional power, where needed, and an all-pervading elegance, forming a rare and fascinating combination of excellence seldom found in the highest works of any class; while those of Jean Goujon received an additional charm from a slight spice of the quaintness of the middle ages still linger-

ing about them, but so slight that, like a minute portion of some pungent condiment to well combined cookery, it gives the last touch of art, and heightens the flavour of the whole combination.

In Italy, Giovanni dell' Opera, Nicolo di Tributo, Baccio Bondinelli, Vincenzo Dante, and others, carried forward the art with success, and produced some fine works; but they had no longer the quaint bloom of the first revival upon them, and in that respect were less attractive perhaps than the best examples of the period in France.

In England, our native sculptors had disappeared with the decay of Gothic architecture, and in Germany, sculpture on a grand scale made little progress, though the miniature sculpture of Albert Durer in wood, hone-stone, and ivory, were exquisite works of the kind.

The sculpture of the 17th century in Italy and France, is marked by other characteristics than those of the 15th and 16th. The simplicity and severe elegance derived from antique models gave place to an ambitious and showy style, in which all sorts of difficulties, unsuited to such a material as marble, were resorted to; such as the "man escaping from the net of sin," to be spoken of hereafter, in which the entire net-work is produced by detached cutting, from the same block of marble as the figure.

As an example of the over-wrought and confused style of the Italian sculpture of the 15th century, I may cite the celebrated Twelve Apostles by Bernini, in the church of St. Giovanni Lateranno. In painting, as in sculpture, the Twelve Apostles, accompanied by their respective emblems, formed one of the most frequent subjects of the early masters, and their treatment by successive hands, as modern art progressed, might alone furnish a history of sculpture from the 9th to the 19th century. The correct but rude character of the earliest periods—the more elegant treatment of the 13th century—the angularity of the 14th, and the grace combined with grandeur of the 15th, more particularly in Italy—form the most marked epochs which preceded the works of Bernini. This clever and rapid sculptor, at the same time painter and architect, one of the last of the race of those great Italian artists who combined, and successfully combined, the profession and practice of three distinct arts, treated his twelve colossal statues of the Apostles, in the church of St. Giovanni Lateranno, in a masterly manner, as far as florid execution is concerned, and some of the figures exhibit great grandeur of conception; but the flutter of the flying drapery, the exaggerated waving of the hair, combined almost always with over-dramatic action, give a theatrical, and, to use a vulgar term, clap-trap tone to these otherwise fine works. I fear I may have recorded a more favourable opinion of them in my journal of my first impressions in Rome, written some years ago, when I was struck with the dashing splendour and facile chiseling of these works.

Bernini is indeed the Rubens of sculpture, though certainly exhibiting less of true artistic power than the glorious Fleming. It is impossible in the present space to cite more than one or two names in illustration of the art of a period or country; and therefore, though fifty other names of the Berninian period thrust themselves upon the memory, that of Bernini must suffice, as his reputation was not merely Italian but European. He was invited to Paris, where he executed the noble bust of

Louis XIV., and declined a similar invitation to England from Charles I., dreading the sea voyage; but executed the bust of that unhappy monarch from the well-known sketch by Vandyck, in which the king is represented in front face, and both right and left profiles. The bust, however, did not arrive till after the execution of that prince; and many anecdotes are related, to the effect, that the marble was found stained with a spot of blood, &c., when it eventually arrived in England. No English sculptors worthy of note yet appeared; but in France, worthy successors of those of the age of Francis I. were found, such as Puget, Le Poutre, Le Gros, the Coustons, and others. Specimens of the works of most of these masters, and many others, may be found in the gardens of the Tuileries.

Puget was undoubtedly the greatest of the group, and his works are in many respects superior to his Italian rivals, Bernini or Algardi. His celebrated Caryatides, which supports the great balcony of the Town-hall at Toulon, are truly magnificent works of their class, and the vigour with which these colossal figures are conceived and executed, earned for their author the title of the French Michael Angelo. His Milo, and his group of Perseus and Andromeda, at the entrance of the park of Versailles, are among his best works, and are perhaps superior to any other executed in Europe at that period. Many equestrian statues of great excellence were executed in France in the course of the 17th century; some of them of great merit. How superior to anything of the kind in England, may be conceived by comparison with the bronze statue of Charles I., an English work, which, though pleasing, and in some respects graceful and meritorious as a work of native art, is yet far below any of the best works of the Continent of similar style. Among works of French sculpture of the 17th century, I may mention the celebrated "Horses of Marly," as they are called, as possessing that genuine goodness, with all their faults, which alone stamps a work with perennial popularity; in this case proved by the thousands of copies, both large and small, which have been made of these groups; for there is scarcely a house, wherein a tolerable collection of bronzes gives token of the residence of an amateur of art, where a miniature bronze copy of the "Marly Horses" may not be found; and even the Italian boys carry about shilling casts of them, which always find a ready sale. In the beginning of the 18th century this school of French sculpture began to decay, and the last names connected with the art, previous to the Revolution, are those of Bouchardon and Pigal, whose chief merit is expert execution; the style being trivial, and the flutter of the draperies exaggerated far beyond the most objectionable works of Bernini or his imitators, without any of their force or grandeur. In short, the decline of art during the 18th century was most rapid throughout Europe, the latent causes of which have yet to be fully explained, but which I may not dilate upon in my present space.

In Germany and Spain, the art of sculpture followed a similar, but less striking course, and in other countries its career was not different.

In England, the race of sculptors, partly native, who had executed the fine tombs of the Elizabethan and subsequent periods, had disappeared or sunk into utter insignificance; and the little sculpture worthy of remark, was principally the work of foreign artists.

The sculpture in the form of portrait statues of royal personages of the reigns of James II., Anne, and the three first sovereigns of the house of Hanover, is sufficiently poor; and, of ideal statuary, that miserable artistic epoch exhibits an absolute blank.

Towards the close of the 18th century, the portraits, and a few of the sepulchral monuments of Roubiliac, exhibit some of the characters of the French school of the time in a favourable manner; and the works of Bacon are above contempt. Then, the bust maker, Nollekens, must be mentioned; but the only English sculptor of the time who did anything to exalt the art, and whose career indeed marks an epoch in the arts of Europe, was Flaxman; but he has left few works, and his fame principally rests upon his outline illustrations of Homer and Dante, attempts at the revival of classic simplicity and purity of design which preceded the efforts in the same direction of the modern school of Germany. Flaxman's admiration of the high qualities of Grecian sculpture was dissipated by means of his lectures, and his genius extended its influence beyond the limits of his more peculiar domain; and though the patronage of Wedgewood worked a revolution in the fictile wares of Staffordshire, which causes some of the specimens produced at that time, at the cost of a few shillings, to be now bought at high prices for the enrichment of select cabinets.

The name of Chantrey afterwards became the highest in English sculpture, but the cool judgment of posterity will no doubt come to the conclusion that, except in the inferior department of portrait busts, he was far overrated by his contemporaries; and, in fact, the monument in Lichfield Cathedral, upon which the critics of a quarter of a century ago went into ecstasies, must be acknowledged to be a very weak, and altogether second rate performance. His equestrian statue of George IV., at Charing-cross, is equally poor, if not more so—a verdict which may also be pronounced upon that of the Duke of Wellington, in front of the Royal Exchange. In short, the works of Chantrey want that *hardiesse*, that nerve, that vigour, which, combined with a certain indescribable grace, marks the works of all truly great sculptors, ancient and modern. Such a combination of grace and vigour is found in the works of Phidias, of Michael Angelo, of Jean Goujon; but in the works of Chantrey both are absent. There is a quiet, respectable propriety about his productions, which, with their frequently clever manipulation, keeps them just above the dead level of mediocrity; but into the region of ideal art they never rise.

In Italy, about the same period, a similar but superior genius arose. Canova's first steps in the plastic art were exercised upon the ornamentation of pastry-cooks' devices for dinner-table decorations; and his statuettes in butter or sugar soon attracted attention. The pastry-cook's boy became one of the most celebrated sculptors of modern times; and appearing, as he did, after a century of gradual decadence in art, his graceful works, in which he attempted to restore the taste for the long neglected severe simplicity of Greek art, soon acquired an European celebrity; and as he boldly rushed into the region of the ideal, and treated the highest class of mythological and poetical subjects, his fame justly rose far above those sculptors of the period who were engaged, with few exceptions, upon mere portraiture.

The excellence of his works was doubtless overrated by his enthusiastic admirers,

but after deducting from a well-earned high reputation, a certain conventional coldness, and an equally conventional prettiness in his female heads, and a want of power thoroughly to understand the true spirit of that Greek art, the chief characteristic of which he sought to restore; yet his dancing nymphs, and other works of that class, will always remain masterpieces in their peculiar style, and the colossal head of Napoleon at Chatsworth contains qualities of a very high, if not the highest, character. He was followed in Italy by Thorwalsden, the Dane, whose first inspirations were derived from Canova, though he afterwards worked out a style peculiar to himself.

In France, the style of Canova predominated during the reign of Napoleon, and the early part of the Bourbon restoration; but no French sculptor of that epoch appeared, whose works approach the peculiar excellencies of the originator.

Let us now proceed to the works of living sculptors. In France and Germany, towards the end of the first quarter of the present century, a new race of artists had appeared, who professed innovative theories somewhat analogous to those put forth by the band of English artists now calling themselves Pre-Raphaelites. The sculptors, as well as the painters, of continental Europe, revolted against the somewhat servile devotion to classic art, which the talents of Canova, and of the French painter, David, had rendered nearly universal; and, rushing into the opposite extreme, determined, even in imaginary subjects, to abandon the ideal in art, and resort to positive and direct imitation of individual nature.

Some remarkable works were produced under the influence of the new theory (for there were men of genius in the field); and the war between classicist and Romanticist, as the two schools were called, raged for a time with what may be truly called fury. The great bulk of the press went, of course, with the older and most strongly-established theory,—the routine of professional criticism was not to be suddenly diverted from the ease of a well-beaten path. But the works of a few eminent men so exquisitely combined the boasted simplicity and purity of the classic style with a certain portion of the rugged vigour of the new school, and young, fresh, and ardent writers took up the new position so determinately, that the Romanticists eventually remained masters of the field; and such men as Danneker and Schwanthaler, in Germany, and as David, of Angers, and others in France, have produced works combining brilliant conception, and vigorous power of execution, worthy of the intellectual progress of the 19th century. The prominent English names belonging to the same epoch, the last twenty-five years, are Gibson and Bailey, both somewhat too closely attached to the classical feeling even to imitation, especially the former, to stand in the same rank for originality as the great names of the Continent. Indeed, a section of our school, at the head of which perhaps Macdowell may be named, threatens to displace the great celebrities by a more independent course, both of study and practice.

The collection of sculpture in the building in Hyde-park will enable us to judge of the relative merits of the existing race of European sculptors, not omitting the transatlantic pretensions of our American brethren.

Here, whatever the decision of the jurors may be, it is quite evident that the highest place in the truly ideal region of the highest walk of sculpture belongs to the German,

Kiss, the author of the "Amazon," and as an example of the high position of the ideal, when sufficiently founded upon the firm base, not of an individual nature, in any special class of form, but of collective nature, if I may be allowed the term. As expressing an ideal, founded upon a race, rather than upon an individual, I will compare the group of the Amazon, which embodies the former view, with the "Greek Slave," which is merely an exquisite reflex of a very interesting individual model, in which certain personal defects are inevitable; such as belong to the individual, and not to the genus. These peculiarities are so marked in the present instance as to produce at once the painful sensation of a particular person wantonly stripped, and exposed, and the unpleasant impression produced has been somewhat idly thought to be the triumphant realization of the intention of the artist; but—if an artist could be found, capable of representing, not the image of an individual, but an ideal of the female form of the human race thus exposed for sale to slavery—how much nobler would be the sympathies aroused, than by the impression of a particular person thus actually and really exposed, in a real, vulgar slave-market. The "Greek Slave" conveys the painful idea of individual exposure and nakedness; but is such the impression on beholding the finest works of Grecian art, or Kiss's noble group of the "Amazon?"

The French sculptor, Lechesne, in his powerfully conceived and admirably wrought groups of the "Eagle attacking the Child of the dead Mother," and the "Child protected by the Dog from a Serpent," has also taken up too strongly the ground of individual delineation, rather than ideal generalization, but with so much more nerve and imagination than Mr. Powers, that the want of a more refined idealism is scarcely felt under the influence of the striking emanation of genius, however inconsistent with the highest theories of the art.

Energetic power of delineation is peculiar to the modern French school, and is exhibited with amazing force and skill in more than one work in the Exhibition, but in none more so than in the "First Cradle," in which the figure of Eve is treated with truly wonderful vigour: the luxuriant mass of uncombed but glistening hair is a magnificent display of artistic manipulation of the highest character, and the whole combination exhibits great energy of thought and artistic power.

There are some graceful works of Belgian artists, in which a combination of Grecian idealism, with a sufficient admixture of modern nature to produce a fresh and charming effect, such as that group, in which the idea of the refinement of beauty triumphing over brute force, is expressed by the figure of an exquisitely-formed "Female clipping the talons of a Lion," the "Indian Mother at the Tomb of her Child," and other works. But what shall we say to the *soi-disant* Austrian sculpture, in which the wretched piece of servilely vulgar portraiture, the statue of Radetzky, is the only Austrian work contained in the sculpture gallery, under the name of Austria, which is entirely the produce of the subjugated cities of Italy?

To these works the attention of the public has been most strongly attracted, but certainly not by the real excellence of the works themselves, which, though infinitely beyond the figure-head image of Radetzky, are yet of very second-rate merit; the much-admired "Nest of Cupids" is even third rate: but it is not to the "Nest of Cupids," or even to the better things of this gallery, I fear, that the general

public has turned to with so much admiration, but rather to the poor, tricky devices of the "Vestal Virgin," and other figures, in which the effect of a transparent drapery covering yet exposing the features, is wrought out with considerable skill. It is pitiful to see the public taste thus become a victim to the empty clap-trap of art, to a mere example of dexterity of chisel; and as an inducement to that same public to look for higher and better things, I may inform it that the trick is a stale one—an argument generally irresistible with the fickle monster called the Public, whose voracious but easily palled appetite regards novelty above all other delicacies.

In the chapel of San Severo, at Naples, not always open, as being a private oratory of the noble family of the Sangri, is a statue singularly enough called "Chastity," veiled in a similar manner to the veiled vestal of the Exhibition, every limb and lineament being distinctly traceable through the superfluous drapery. This statue is a work of Corradini, executed in memory of the mother of Raimondo di Sangri. Another work in the chapel, and of the same epoch—the 17th century—is a figure of the "Dead Christ" covered with a shroud, through the folds of which every feature is perfectly discernible; and the *finesse*, skill, and feeling with which this effect has been wrought out by the hand of its sculptor, Guisepppe Sanmartino, redeems it from the triviality which would otherwise attach to attempts so completely out of the domain of legitimate art.

But a still more astonishing work of similar character is to be seen in the same oratory, the intricate elaboration of the workmanship of which calls to mind the patient skill of the Chinese carver, by whose labour the perforated spheres of ivory are ornamented and detached, one within the other. This statue is said to represent the Prince Raimondo Sangri himself, under the form of man, escaping from the net of sin by divine aid. The work is considered the *capo d'opera* of Guccirolo, and is exhibited by the guides as one of the greatest wonders of art, the net and the entire group being carved out of a single block of marble. It is easy to perceive, not only the unprofitable waste of excessive labour in this work, but also the poverty of the allegory by which the idea is interpreted. "The net of sin" is barely tolerable in a certain class of literature; but when we behold it positively and elaborately worked out in material marble, it becomes absolutely ridiculous; and the work is, therefore, with all its merits of manipulation, only one of the most remarkable monuments of a depraved and false taste.

Of the English works of sculpture in the Exhibition, Hyde Park, I shall only allude, for want of space, to the statue of the "Hunter," by Gibson, and the three statues by Macdowell. To the former all respect is due, as the work of an artist whose persevering devotion to his calling has earned for him the highest position in the British school. But in his present, and, indeed, in all his works, according to my own impression, notwithstanding their excellence of design and beauty of execution, there is an attachment to the bygone and dead forms of the conventional beauty of classical antiquity, which deprive his productions of that living interest which a closer association with existing forms of beauty, of sentiment, of style, and of expression, might impart to them.

The exquisite works of Gibson do not seem thoroughly to belong to our age;

they are, in fact, essentially Pagan in conception, as well as style ; and the excessive devotion to special forms of Grecian statuesque beauty often suggests the idea that the English statue one is admiring, may be claimed piecemeal by Grecian predecessors—the torso, by a Venus, an arm, by a nymph, a foot, by a Cupid, the head, by a Diana. Yet I would not, as I said, have a sculptor resort to mere individual portraiture, in order to give individual character.

I contend for idealism in art ; but not the idealism of other times, of other forms of civilization, of extinct peculiarities of race ; no, but on the contrary, for an idealism consistent with the sympathies, the associations, and the aspirations of the present age. And I contend, again, that each artist must idealize according to his own individual organization ; so that the works of each, although conventional, inasmuch as they should never be mere copies of individual nature, shall yet possess individuality of character, in being original and unique idealizations, and not idealizations after the manner of the Greeks, or of any other marked school of art.

I think that the works of Macdowell embody this theory more than those of any other English sculptor. His female, and youthful male heads, express a peculiar cast of entrancing beauty, which, though ideal, is seemingly real, and that reality belongs to the present age, and to the Anglo-Saxon race.

There is a celestial loveliness in the beautiful face of his “Eve,” which, though more lovely than the features of any individual woman, is yet an embodiment of the peculiar style of beauty which distinguishes the women of his own country. In his “Cupid,” the same charm exists ; the appropriate expression is ideal, and yet it is full of the real life of our age and race, and seems to breathe forth the peculiar beauty of the blue-eyed, fair-haired children of our native land. The conventional forms adopted by servile worshippers of the antique—the well-known form of Grecian eye, the well-known Grecian treatment of the hair—are not reproduced by Macdowell ; he has fully appreciated Hellenic art, and knows the secret of its perfection ; but he is dreaming an equal perfection upon similar broad principles, but distinct details and distinct general character. His form, his expression, his breath of life, are of the time and of the land in which he lives ; the secret, in fact, of the perfection of the arts of Greece also, which were but the choicest emanations of that age, and of that land.

I feel, while I am writing, that these thoughts are not mine alone, but that they pervade, more or less, the minds of nearly all our younger artists ; of men who are destined to carry the arts of Great Britain to a higher pitch than they have ever yet attained, and in a higher feeling than has been as yet achieved. We see already a tendency not only to abandon mere portraiture as the only profitable branch of sculpture, but to aim at the sculptural embodiment of subjects connected with our history, our poetry, and our religion—embodiments which, with the aid of the facilities of reproduction of artistic works now so rapidly extending, will carry the refining effects of the love of the beautiful among all classes, and tend, more than amended laws or political reforms, to the elevation of the national mind.

The Greeks were so devoted to the love of ideal beauty, that even to their greatest men, a mere iconic or portrait statue was seldom allowed—the one to Miltiades, after the great Athenian victory, being among the rare exceptions : and when this feel-

ing shall be ripened with us, we may hope to avoid the perpetration of such excrescences, in the name of metropolitan and national monuments, as the colossal caricature of the Duke of Wellington at Hyde-park Corner.

Sculpture, the highest and purest of the fine arts, has a noble and a sacred trust to fulfil. To teach the knowledge and the appreciation of the beautiful, is one of the highest tasks confided to man—is especially that of the artist, and more especially that of the sculptor.

How much teaching is yet required, one may estimate by examining the effect produced upon the spectators at the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy, by the scanty array of sculpture there displayed, in the wretched apartment devoted to it. The nude figures, those representations of the divine form in which the Creator has clothed humanity, appear to strike most of the visitors, uneducated in art, not only as something very shocking to coat-and-waistcoat morality; but also as something strange. They gaze with a half incredulous eye, as upon some monstrous animal seen for the first time. A sort of vague disappointment, too, seems part of the unpleasing impression which the finest works of sculpture produce upon them, as though they had not imagined the human form to be that kind of thing. A spruce youth, a real credit to his tailor, whose ideal of feminine grace is founded upon the wasp-like waist and exuberant petticoat of the last vision of ball-room beauty he waltzed with, may often be seen in the sculpture room, apparently suffering under the heavy disappointment of an unexpected revelation only assuaged by a certain incredulity in the correctness of the delineation.

Sculpture has, as it were, preserved the most perfect types of the "human form divine," through ages of false civilization, and through the laborious disguises of long centuries of various barbarisms. It has vindicated its exquisite symmetry against the worst assaults of tailors, stay-makers, peruke-makers, red-heeled shoes, or the Puritan iconoclasts of all times.

The chaste and sacred form, petrified, as it were, by the magic of Praxiteles or Phidias, in the Pentilic or the Parian stone, and by their more humble followers in the marble of more modern quarries, has alone preserved among the cultured few a true appreciation of the beauty of the most perfect example of living organization; and to complete and extend the knowledge and admiration of this highest emanation of the beautiful, is the domain and the mission of the noble art of sculpture.*

* I originally intended devoting a portion of this chapter to that branch of sculpture which depends for its effect on colour as well as form. The chryselephantine, or gold and ivory statuary of the age of Phidias holds the highest rank in this branch of art; and as some of his noblest works, especially the Olympian Jupiter, were formed of these materials, and not of marble, it becomes at once evident that sculpture, aided by the colour and texture of the materials employed, need not descend to the level of modern wax-work. That white marble was not absolutely essential to the high character of sculpture, is sufficiently proved by the exquisite *Fawn*, and other works in *rosso-antico*. Statues of a high class, in two or three different marbles, as the *disparies* in dark, and the *flesh* in light marble, are not uncommon; and the painted statuary of the mediæval epochs, founded possibly on antique models, is proved by existing examples not to have been deprived of its artistic character by the addition of artificial colour; but the question of the good or bad taste of these invasions of the simple domain of FORM, which is the especial region of sculpture, would require a chapter exclusively devoted to it; and I therefore dismiss it at once without discussion, merely inviting my reader to think out the problem for himself.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

PAINTING.

PAINTING, though it is compelled to hold a secondary rank to sculpture, commands a wider domain, and appeals to a more extensive sphere of popular appreciation. The fascination of colour, the striking effects produced by artificial light and shade, and the magic of perspective, both linear and aerial, impart to it, in its highest development, attractions to which the severe and limited privileges of sculpture are alien.

The facilities also, for expressing dramatic action are infinitely greater; and though antique sculpture produced, occasionally, what may be termed "marble pictures" in the colossal compositions filling the pediments of the most splendid temples, such as the well-known group of "Niobe and her Children," as well as relievos, both strong and slight, in other portions of the building, like the Metopes, and the low reliefs in the portico of the Parthenon, yet, such works, in the severe treatment they must receive in sculptured marble, do not speak so fully to the eye as a dramatic scene embodied in painting of the highest class—such as is exhibited in the works of the great masters of the Italian mediæval school, or by more modern and equally gifted artists.

Painting is thus more essentially a popular art than sculpture; it has formed the delight of the people from the earliest times, its beauties being more distinctly intelligible to the uncultured eye, than the more recondite excellencies of sculpture in its purest form.*

The Egyptians attributed the origin of painting to divine inspiration, and conceived that it was confided to man for the purpose of recording in the sacred writings the deeds of gods and heroes, for the first writing was strictly pictorial; the object to be described being painted in close imitation of nature, and not expressed, as now, by a combination of phonetic characters. Thus pictures and writings were originally one, and the painted sculptures, descriptive of the conquests of the Egyptians on the walls of the palaces and temples of Thebes and Memphis, were such "handwriting on the wall" as the youthful Daniel was called upon to interpret.

* Of course I do not allude to the painted statuary of the Greeks, which must have appealed in a striking manner to the popular mind.

But, as paleographic painting became more and more conventional, reducing itself at last to mere linear abbreviations of the original forms, the art which had originated that of writing, developed itself in another direction; and painting, as a medium of decoration, and as a means representing detached events, without reference to a written history, gradually extended and developed its magical powers.

That it had attained great excellence at a very early period appears pretty certain, and its first steps appear to have occurred in the following chronological order.

At first painting and sculpture may be considered as one and the same art, as colour is essential to neither, either as the same, or as distinct arts of design. The earliest sculptures were more generally coloured, which colouring may be considered the first step in painting. The coloured basso-relievo of the Egyptians were a singular and close combination of both sculpture and painting, and tend more than any other existing monuments to prove that, as I have stated, the arts which eventually diverged into such distinct tracks, were originally combined as one.

Greek and Latin authors, in speaking of the origin of painting, consider what is termed skiagraphy (*σκια γραφία*) to have been the first step. This term signifies a mere *external* outline, such as is formed by a shadow cast by the sun or a lamp.

The first skiagraphists are alluded to in the oft-repeated Grecian fable, which describes the daughter of Dibutades, a potter of Sicyon, who, observing the shadow of her lover upon the wall, drew its outline with such fidelity, that her father was enabled to cut away with great accuracy the plaster within the outline, and obtain an impression in clay from the cavity so produced. Athenogoras mentions as the first skiagraphist Saurias of Samos, who traced his horse's shadow upon the sand with the point of his spear. Such outlined figures were, in the next stage of the art, filled up with certain colours. Whether the colouring of the different figures and draperies were alike, or different, they did not constitute "painting" in the high acceptance of the term, but only "colouring." Those subjects, doubtless the earliest, in which only one colour was used, were termed monochromes,* while those in which various colours were used were polychromes. The next step was the addition to the outline of the inner markings.

The art, up to this period, is thought by some to have been always practised upon a white ground, and that the introduction of arbitrary self-colours, as alluded to above, was a subsequent addition, first practised by Cleophantus of Corinth, described by Pliny, as using "*testa trita*," which is understood to mean drawing his figures on a red ground, as we find them on the ancient Greek and Etruscan vases.

The painters of the designs on the Greek vases do not appear to have been held in any esteem, as their names are not mentioned by ancient authors; they were most likely a race of draughtsmen exclusively employed in the Grecian potteries. The grace and spirit of their works, however, may be taken as an indication of the great excellence of the higher branches of painting in Greece.

* At a later period there was also the monochrome of a higher character, in which a subject, though entirely executed in one colour, as gray, red, brown, or any other colour, was as properly shaded according to the true principles of chiaro-oscuro as the works in which all the local colours were added. Such works were of the same character as our mediæval miniatures in *Camé-gris*.

The proper application of local colours, in strict accordance with nature, was an immense step in advance of the application of colour as a mere arbitrary decoration, and is so mentioned by ancient authors, who have fortunately preserved to us most interesting records of the early progress of Grecian art.

The art of painting had most likely arrived at great perfection in Asia Minor, before it had emerged from its infancy in Greece, as Candaules King of Lydia is said to have purchased a picture by Bularchus, representing a battle of the Magnetes, for as much gold as would cover its surface. This particular assertion is, however, open to criticism on more than one account; but it may, no doubt, be taken as general evidence, that a school of painting existed in Asia Minor as early as the time of Candaules, 716 B. C.

Cimon of Cleonæ is the first Greek artist whose name is recorded as a proficient in the art, and is described as not only understanding the proper application of local colour previously practised by Eumarus, but also to have understood light and shade, and the foreshortening of the limbs, as well as the indication of such minor features as the muscles, veins, &c. He is supposed to have lived about the time of Solon, in the sixth century before Christ.

It was in the next century, however, the fifth before the Christian era, that Greek painting attained its first truly remarkable era. The works of Cimon were no doubt of the archaic style, similar to the sculptures attributed to Dædalus; but Polygnotus of Thasos, who came to Athens during the supremacy of Pericles, and was consequently a cotemporary of Phidias, advanced the art at once to a pitch of excellence, in which it would seem, from the remarks of ancient writers, that it equalled the rival art of sculpture, even in the hands of Phidias himself.

The works of Polygnotus, however, do not appear to have been detached pictures, but decorations of temples, the most celebrated of which are mentioned by Pausanias as being a great series of paintings in the Lesche of the temple of Apollo at Delphi, to a minute description of which the Greek antiquarian devotes seven chapters. I conceive that this series of paintings, one of which represented the siege and destruction of Troy, must have been formed of several parallel spaces or strips, one below the other, filled with successive groups arranged in chronological order, somewhat similar to the basso-relievo in the portico of the Parthenon, or like the painted basso-relievo of the Egyptian temples, which they no doubt greatly resembled in general effect, though of very superior artistic execution, consisting of simple painting, instead of being low reliefs heightened in effect by the addition of colour, as in the Egyptian works.

But though the works of Polygnotus were probably pure painting, the art of painting statuary was also a profession in Greece at that time, and continued so till the time of Praxiteles, who is said to have declared that he preferred, before all his works, those which had been coloured by Nicias.

The painted histories of Polygnotus possessed no doubt high excellence of design, and were of a very sublime character; for their merit was not only extolled by the highest critics of the time, but by those also of the age of Alexander.

Quintilian, however, observes, that there was a certain rudeness about them,

and that their peculiar excellencies could only be considered as the commencement of the refinement and completeness of execution that followed in the next century; stating, at the same time, rather satirically, that he feared there might be some affectation influencing the judgment of those who preferred the early works to those of subsequent artists.

Zeuxis and Apollodorus, in the next generation, added dramatic effect and unity of composition to the art. Parrhasius, Eupompus, and Timanthes were the other greatest names of the period, in which nearly all the excellencies of which the art is capable, appear to have been attained as completely as in the greatest age of modern Italian art.

All superior works in the time of Zeuxis were no longer painted on the walls of buildings themselves, but on separate prepared panels, framed in various ways, and afterwards incrusting on the walls where required.

The greatest of the race of painters—who, without being able to exceed the sublimity or completeness of the art as practised by Zeuxis and Parrhasius, except in a certain grace or elegance—was Apelles, and in his works this refinement of beauty was by the Greeks termed *Xapis*, and by the Romans *venustus*. The kind of elegance here expressed may be approximately understood by the character of his favourite subjects, his most perfect work being his “Venus Anadyomene”—(Venus rising from the sea); from which it would seem that it was in the softer graces of the female form that his greatest excellence consisted. But that he was not deficient, at the same time, in the power of investing the male subject with its due dignity, is proved by his possession of the exclusive privilege of painting the portraits of his great patron, Alexander.

Protogenes, Euphranor, Nicias, Athenion, and Philochares, were the cotemporaries of Apelles, and were the last of the great race of Greek painters; for after the Alexandrian epoch Grecian painting rapidly declined; much more rapidly than sculpture, which, even as late as the time of Trajan, produced such works as the Laocoon and the Antinous, while, after the reigns of the first successors of Alexander, painting rapidly declined; and subsequent to the subjection of Greece by the Romans, no great works of painting appear to have been executed.

The Greek artists who flocked to Rome became chiefly employed in portraiture or in the decoration of private dwellings, such works being generally executed in a rapid and careless manner, quite excluding them from holding any rank as works of high art.* Two names are, however, mentioned, which did honour to the art after its general decline—Timomachus, a cotemporary of Cæsar, and Ætion, who flourished as late as the reign of Hadrian.

I must at once pass over the several remnants of Roman painting preserved to us, regretting that there are none of Greece, and proceed to the final decline and utter debasement of the art towards the time of the fall of the Western Empire.

* Portraiture appears to have flourished greatly in Rome, as we find Varro making a collection of 700 portraits of eminent men. But as an example of the taste in painting which distinguished the Romans, I may cite the colossal portrait of Nero, 120 feet high, which was painted upon canvas, the first time that its use is recorded.

At that period, the middle of the 5th century, we have examples of Græco-Roman painting—remains which have been but recently studied, and for which we are indebted principally to the race of artists of a particular class who devoted their lives to the enrichment of copies of the gospels, in which miniature representations of the Evangelists, and events in the history of Christ, are profusely scattered; and it is to the sacred character of the books of which these works form the enrichment, that we are indebted for the preservation of such* interesting monuments of the state of the pictorial art at this obscure epoch.*

These miniatures are generally very elaborate in their details of dress, &c., richly coloured, and highly illuminated with gilding. The *drawing* of most of these works is however, artistically speaking, of the rudest and coarsest description; and their imitations by Hibernian and Anglo-Saxon illuminators of the 7th and 8th centuries still more so; which latter more resemble Mexican or very early Chinese art, than any other European works I am acquainted with. We now approach the epoch at which the last *ten centuries of art* commence their progress.

About the period of Charlemagne, or rather about the middle of the 9th century, the arts began to revive, and the works executed even in Constantinople about that period, are very superior to Byzantine productions of the 5th, 6th, and 7th centuries, while in France and Germany the entire interior of the churches were covered with painting.

Illuminated miniatures, executed in Constantinople in the 9th and 10th centuries, possess occasionally a nobleness of character almost worthy of the descendants of the great artists of Greece; but yet, taken as entire compositions, they are stiff, and with a strong tincture of the general barbarism of the time; when architecture alone, of the fine arts, appeared to flourish, painting upon a large scale having still further declined about this time,

The 10th, 11th, and 12th centuries, like the 7th, 8th, and 9th, afford but few monuments of pictorial art, except such as are found in illuminated MSS.; but in those invaluable records the links in the history of painting are faithfully preserved. The improvement in the decorative arabesque borderings was much more remarkable during those periods than that of the miniature pictures, which still preserve, frequently, much of the debased Roman character, without any marked advance, but rather perhaps a tendency to decline. The remains of large mural paintings of these epochs, may still be seen at Milan and in other ancient churches of Italy.

In the 13th century the arts of design began to live a new life, and a peculiar style arose, which is as remarkable for an elegant feeling in the mode of treating the human figure, for graceful drapery, and for profuse and eminently original ornament, as it is for the quaintness which was so long the only characteristic which modern archæalogists perceived in it.

Lately, however, it has been somewhat too well appreciated, and servile copies of the remarkable style of this epoch—especially with the view, as it would seem, of

* A few MSS., not of a sacred character, are also attributed to this epoch, 'as the Dioscorides at Vienna, Terence at Florence, fragments of a copy of Virgil, &c.

preserving all its most glaring defects—have been perpetrated to an extent that has become nauseating, and the same may be said of the stupid reproduction of works of the two succeeding centuries.

The 13th century, of which we have such fine pictorial records in the illuminated MSS. and painted windows in England and France, was marked in Italy by the rise of a race of artists in the higher branches of the pictorial art, whose works were free from much of the grotesque *drawing* and quaint characteristics of our northern works.

The Italian painting of the 13th and 14th, and early part of the 15th centuries, marks a beautiful and exquisite phase in modern art, in which, following Cimabue and others, the well-known names of Giotto, Masaccio, Fra Beato, Gaddo Gaddi, Ghirlandajo, and Perugino, the master of Raphael, with a host of others, occur. In their various works, almost every kind of excellence short of conventional dexterity, the art of grouping, or composition, and the value of *chiaro-oscuro*, were accomplished; and in an exquisitely simple and *naïve* interpretation of nature, sometimes accompanied by admirable expression, these artists have remained inimitable; and while, as I have said, a certain archaic rigidity lingers about their works, they are free from the grotesque quaintness of the more northern productions of the period. The expression of their female heads frequently beams with angelic sweetness, and in the later masters of the period, with exquisite grace and beauty, arising, doubtless, from the custom of painting the portraits of living persons in historical pictures; such anachronisms proving the love of art which existed among the higher classes at the time. The most beautiful female heads of Ghirlandajo in his paintings of the choir of St. Maria Novella, are said to be portraits of "Genevra de' Benci," the Florentine beauty of her day.

The remarkable features of the school of art which immediately followed this epoch in Italy, and developed itself at the close of the 15th and first quarter of the 16th century, is founded upon the discovery and general adoption of certain artistic maxims, regarding the art of grouping, the use of light and shadow, and their more agreeable proportions, and a freer treatment of natural forms, the necessary consequences of the assiduous and continuous study of the two preceding centuries.

Giorgione, Titian, and Corregio in the North, and Michael Angelo and Raphael in Central Italy, were the leaders of this change.

It appears singular at the first view, that the works of Raphael, which retain a much stronger tincture of the archaic rigidity of the preceding period than those of any of his cotemporaries, should have taken the highest rank, even in his own day; a fact I shall return to in speaking of a rising sect in the modern English school.

Michael Angelo also, though in a less degree than Raphael, still exhibits slight traces of the so-termed archaic feeling, even through the colossal energy of his style, which is less extraordinary, perhaps, than in the case of Raphael, as his period of maturity preceded that of Raphael by twenty years.

Andrea del Sarto, precisely cotemporary with Raphael, painted in a much more advanced style than the latter, both as to freedom of drawing, sense of colour, and knowledge of *chiaro-oscuro*.

In the north of Italy, where the revival of art had been later, it was more rapid. Titian and Corregio, the great artists of Venice and Parma, were cotemporaries of Raphael, and yet, in skill of manipulation, in knowledge of the science of shadowing, and in picturesque form and softness of outline, which latter they carried to the highest extent it has yet reached, they were far in advance of Raphael; as, indeed, was the Venetian Giorgione, his predecessor. The foot note will show the cotemporary maturity of these great artists.*

The superiority of rank held by Raphael even over Michael Angelo, must be attributed to a certain intellectual grace of the highest character, which invariably distinguishes the works of the painter of Urbino, and by his adhesion to a great extent to the simpler treatment of the former period, which he never abandoned for any of the refinements of colour, *chiaro-oscuro*, or Corregioesque softness, not even in his later and more perfect works, such as the cartoons, over the grandeur, simplicity, and great power of accurate delineation of which, the Raphaelesque intellectualism always presides. The reputation of Michael Angelo rests upon similar grounds, though the styles are so utterly distinct. Thus it would appear, that the intellectual treatment of the art, even accompanied by archaic mannerism, is capable of higher and more permanent attractiveness, than the most skilful manipulation, and all the refinements of the conventional mechanism without it.

The followers, of the severe grandeur, and rigid grace of the Roman and Florentine schools, as represented by Raphael and Michael Angelo, were, as all followers necessarily must be, behind their masters, and it was not till another race endowed with real genius, after its kind, the family of the Caracci, endeavoured to blend the decorative character of the schools of the North with the accuracy and severity of those of Rome and Florence, that a new epoch really arose.

But it was, after all, not an original epoch. The tricks of composition, the distribution by rule, of light and shade, the calculated juxta-position of certain colours, combined with a conventional idealism in form, by which all natures were more or less assimilated, and the treatment of the subjects through the medium of a careful manipulation, the result of the most critical study, were the marked characteristics of the school of the Caracci. It is true that the race of artists so educated, have left works as fine as artistic productions can possibly be which are produced through the media of conventional maxims, instead of being inspired by the individual *invention* which necessarily arises from the direct study of nature. The names of Domenichino, Caravaggio, and Guido, are, however, sufficient to show how far art may be carried by such means as those employed by the school of Bologna.

At a later period, the beginning of the 18th century, the Saxon Raphael

* Names.	25 Years of Age in	Died in
L. de Vinci	1479	1519
Giorgione	about 1490	1511
M. Angelo	1490	1563
Raphael	1508	1523
A. del Sarto	1513	1530
Corregio	1519	1534

Mengs endeavoured to restore the high school of historical painting which had decayed utterly after the pupils of the Caracci and the ephemeral fame of Carlo Maratti. But the efforts of Mengs only reproduced classical art in a modern garb, though his efforts, in accordance as they were with the frigid classicism of the time, earned for him a great reputation in his own day.

In Germany, Holland, and Flanders, the beginning of the 16th century was marked by the appearance of such men as Albert Durer, Holbein, Lucas von Legden, and Israel von Mechenen, as well as many others. Their works possess those striking peculiarities, for which the angular feeling of northern Gothic art is remarkable, but with the angularity and sharpness of this style they combined a power of correct delineation now first developed in the North, the vigorous character of which is as remarkable as anything in the history of art. But, as the style of Raphael in Italy was succeeded by one in which conventionality had a greater share than originality, so in Germany, and in Flanders, where oil painting had been first invented by Van Eyck, a similar series of conventional artists followed. In certain domestic subjects, however, the Dutch, by going direct to the source of all originality, nature, struck out a school of art peculiar to themselves, as they did also in landscape; but in high art, the brilliant genius and prosperous career of Rubens, and the daring innovations of Rembrandt, are the only remarkable events which followed the great epoch of Durer and Holbein.

Portrait painting alone remained a flourishing art; indeed, in the portraits of Vandyck and Velasquez, it perhaps attained in the middle of the 17th century its highest development, and a degree of excellence which had been foreshadowed in the North, by the striking works of Holbein.

The conventional styles of portraiture which followed, led by Lely and afterwards by Kneller, with all their flutter of drapery, and prim imitations of courtly nature, sophisticated by a particular phase of civilization, afford an example of the style of art then prevalent all over Europe, for its higher branches had completely decayed. Towards the end of the 18th century, the efforts of Mengs succeeded by those of the French painter David, both aiming at a return to a dead classicism, a revival of Grecian forms, with which the age could have no intimate sympathy, led to nothing better than the style of the Napoleon era; which, except as marking an historical epoch, is utterly contemptible.

In the meantime, Reynolds, in England, had once more made a direct appeal to nature, from which, notwithstanding the mannerism he adopted in carrying it out, European art may date its second revival; for, although the painting of the French "romantic" school, who have superseded the frigid Grecianisms of David and his followers, cannot be termed imitators of the initiative given by Reynolds, they were yet, chronologically speaking, his followers.

Reynolds's attempt was considered absurd by the artists in vogue at the time; and Ellis, the fashionable portrait painter of the day, is reported to have attempted to drive him from his new course, by exclaiming "Shakspeare in poetry, Sir, and Kneller in painting!" a juxta-position which Reynolds was, however, not willing to allow.

Immediately following Reynolds were portrait painters, such as Opie and others, who followed his style; but the frigid compositions of West, for whose works the really great genius of Barry was neglected, were in vogue at the same time, and though Northcote promised better things, the taste for the chilly monotonous works of Westall, Howard, and others, prevailed. It may easily be conceived how unsettled was the public taste in England at the close of the 18th, and beginning of the 19th centuries, when we find the eccentric productions of Fuseli, and the elegant but over-valued designs of Stoddart, occupying contemporaneously the public attention, with those of Westall and West. The names of Wilkie, Lawrence, and Collins, mark more prominently perhaps than any others the dawn of the existing English school, in which brilliant colouring, and a direct appeal to nature, only wanted the addition of the accurate delineative power of the French to make it the first school in Europe; but in this it was lamentably deficient..

How we have had since—our Ettys, our Newtons, our Leslies, our Maclises, our Turners, our Martins, our Danbys, and our Landseers; and in landscape, our Stanfields and our Creswicks, need not be told, as all interested in art well know the anxiety with which their productions have been looked forward to each successive year in our annual exhibitions, and with what genuine enthusiasm their success and that of many other cotemporary artists has been hailed.

In the French school the declared dissent from classicism, and an appeal to living nature, has given rise to such men as Eugene Deveria, Paul de la Roche, Eugene de la Croix, Horace Vernet, and a host of others, who have produced the most striking works in the progress of recent art, both as regards the scale of their performances, and the hardy and novel mode of treatment they have so boldly and successfully adopted. In Germany a somewhat similar course has led to less striking results. The works of the German school of the day make better prints than pictures. They have too much of the cartoon style of the great masters of the 15th century about them to pretend to originality; and to this is added a strong tinge of the exploded French classicism which still lingers about the German school, and gives to it a monotonous character, notwithstanding the genius displayed in the great works of Cornelius, Bendemann, and their compeers, and even of those who have endeavoured to break through the trammels by which the onward progress of the school is delayed. The delay, however, will not be great, for both in Germany and France the present ferment of antagonistic styles is already producing great and striking results.

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES.

Amidst all this progress, all this new life infused into art since the commencement of the present century—by what latent causes it would take too long to discuss—a feeling has developed itself in nearly all the artistic productions of our epoch which betrays, as just hinted at in the German school, a disposition to revive and retain the manner, the principles of practice, and even the manipulation of the great schools of Italy, a conventional system which even our greatest men do not appear to have the courage to

break through. But a band of devoted young artists have tried back, as it were, and found that in modern art, convention began to take the place of simple appeal to nature, even in the works of the great Raphael ; and they have therefore determined to take up art as it is found previous to that epoch, and from that starting point make what advances they may, trusting to nature alone as their guide to lead them on in the path of beauty, and of progress. How far they have as yet succeeded in their chivalrous attempt is a question which has strongly divided public opinion. One set of partizans lauding to the skies even the first efforts of these young painters, and the others, seeing in their works nothing but what is crude, hideous, and contemptible. The press, like the audacious Gaul at the weighing of the Roman ransom, has thrown its ponderous sword into the balance on the side of the latter party, and accompanied its verdict with taunt, and sneer, and ridicule, of every shade and shape—even with invective, and coarse personality, which the case by no means appeared to call for, and which, acting like an over-dose of certain poisons, has served as its own antidote. It would seem that the dose had been administered upon the homœopathic principle of *similis similia curantur*, but certainly not in infinitesimal doses, or imperceptible globules, but by the quart, or rather by the gallon.

The violent character of the onslaught had the effect of enlisting many new defenders on the side of these Argonauts of art; thus seeking the “golden fleece” wherewith to clothe their imaginations, upon barbarous and untrodden shores. The author of “Modern Painters” was among their first defenders, soon followed by the excellent articles by T. H. in an eminent weekly periodical, and many others. A strong section of the public soon followed, and sided so strongly with the persecuted band, that, in a pecuniary sense, their fortunes are made, and they have a fair opportunity of working out their theory, to victory or defeat, as the event may prove.

It is certain that they have gone conscientiously to work, that their productions have been the result not only of deep and careful study, but of equally careful reproduction by means of the most highly-wrought manipulation. They have not painted the clothing of the meadows, and the vegetable denizens of the stream, as a matter of background-work, to be dashed off in a few conventional touches in the studio, from rough sketches, the true character of which might be misinterpreted at every touch: they have not taken nature at second hand; they have at once, beneath the open sky, transferred nature as they saw it to their canvas; they abjured close studios, with lights only to the north, and sought the broad, all-pervading sunshine. They went forth into the woods and fields; they watched the morning daisy, blushing to the tips of its petals as it unfolded its white veil, and exposed its golden face to the bright daylight; they bent over the water-lily—that

“Sculpture-like and stately river queen,”

and saw it lift its marble brow above the waters, and expand its glories to the midday sun; they watched its massive foliage rise while yet folded like a scroll, and by degrees develop its form, and spread its varnished surface level with the gently heaving waters, rocking it, as it were, in a noontide siesta upon a glassy bed. They have

peered curiously into the depths of the waters themselves as they flowed by, and distinguished the shy forms of glittering fish darting here and there among the stems of the lilies, or the deep-rooted reeds, where they trace also the vague outline of other dimly shadowed forms, discovering a whole world of mysteries hidden deeply from vulgar eyes beneath the green waters.

They have sat for hours in the deep silence of the woods, and have watched the light travel from the eastern to the western side of the trunks of the ash, the oak, the beech, the elm, and have noted the texture of their various barks, in all their degrees, from the smooth integument of the beech, to the rugged surface of the oak, and the delicate gray of the ash; they have watched the young shoots expand their youngest leaves, pinked with the ruddy hue of their forest strength; they have sat so still, and so wrapt in their communings with this fresh nature, that the woodpecker has resumed his low tapping upon the hollow trunk of the pollard oak, and the jay has lighted confidently in the branches above them, and sits daintily arranging his gaudy plumage, from which a few bright azure feathers, quaintly striped with jetty black, fall noiselessly to their feet, but not unperceived by these ardent students—I have seen them reproduced in their works, as are also that opening daisy, that fresh juicy foliage of the water-lily, the glittering and darkening scales, now seen, now gone, of the tiny fish, those nimble swimmers, who dart out of sight before their form can be defined, except by the gifted eye of the true student of nature.

The reproduction of these and the like phenomena, has been grappled with by the Pre-Raphaelites, and to a certain extent successfully; but so minutely conscientious has been the manipulation, that much of its excellence has escaped the attention of the ordinary critic. Accustomed to see similar effects produced by a few conventional dashes, he has not perceived how fully and exquisitely they were wrought out in these works.

The careful study of the folds and texture of drapery too, has, in one picture exhibited this season, been carried to a pitch of excellence not attained by any other pencil of the English school. But what seems wanting now, is a keener perception of the beautiful in the human figure, especially in female heads, and a higher and broader perception of general effect, at present to some extent impaired by excessive attention to detail. In avoiding all taint of conventionalism, they have of necessity abandoned many important principles, which, however abused by superficial adoption, and vulgarized by continual repetition unvaried by the infusion of fine individual feeling, must yet form the basis of artistic maxims for all time. However freshly, and with however much novelty of character, these first great principles of art may be worked out, they must still form the grammar of the art, and must not, cannot be abandoned.

But the Pre-Raphaelites will come to this. Let them honestly work their way to it; they have conscientiously *reculé pour mieux sauter*; then let them not be precipitated in their leap by unfair criticism, or unfeeling ridicule; let them advance over the long course they have so courageously undertaken, at their own pace, and with every encouragement in their gigantic undertaking.

In dismissing the subject of "Pre-Raphaelite" art, I must add that, even should

its followers succeed in establishing a school founded upon the realization of the most minute and exquisite treatment of every detail, even in a much higher and more artistic, and more energetic feeling, than is found in the laborious miniatures of Gerard Dow or Mieris, or Metzsu or others of that class, yet, I conceive, that a school founded upon an almost opposite principle, producing details by a few broad and telling touches, and upon general effect produced by means of well-studied masses, of form, colour, and light and shade, may be coequally and coevally successful, as a distinct style of art; for there is a certain fascination about a dashing facility of pencil, when wielded by a genius capable also of the higher requirements, which will, on a different pedestal, hold as high a rank, as minute finish, however exquisite, and however free from any smallness of character.

I will before quitting the subject, suggest to the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, the careful examination of the works of a great cotemporary, too early lost to the art, Leopold Robert, who, to a certain extent, preceded them in their course, and has probably taken a higher and finer view of the position they are assuming, than they are aware of. He too threw aside the conventional touch, the hackneyed mass of shadow, the stereotyped outline of female prettiness, with its unmeaning smirk, and its hues of white and pink; and he too, has gone direct to nature, but with a deeper sense of abstract beauty, as it is eventually defined by the study of many individuals, but not as ever realized in *one*.

Leopold Robert secured to himself another great advantage over the Pre-Raphaelites: he sifted, instead of rejecting all those principles of art evolved by its greatest masters during three centuries of successive study. He found upon examination, that there really were broad irrefragable principles upon which the art of painting, in its highest sphere, must ever be based; and instead of waiting to discover them over again for himself by a course of laborious study, he gladly accepted the discoveries of his predecessors, whether announced as discoveries by themselves or by their critics. It is easy to say of critics, that the makers of rules could not be the authors of the works whose principles they propound. It is easy to say that Aristotle, who so skilfully dissected the great dramatic works of the Greek tragedians, and dug out the principles—principles unperceived by the great authors themselves—upon which they had, by artistic instinct been constructed, could not have written the works whose principles of construction he thus detected. But it is not so easy to prove that the principles so discovered are false; on the contrary, all succeeding analysis tends to confirm their truth. Leopold Robert felt thus of the long-acknowledged principles of his art, and therefore went to work fully armed by all the *conventional* rules, which had been the guides and land-marks of his predecessors, but determined to avoid their *conventional* application. Like the Pre-Raphaelites, he belonged to a band of devoted artists, determined to regenerate art, and how far he succeeded, the well-known composition of his "Harvest Home in the Pontine Marshes," reproduced, in small, at the head of this article, is sufficient to prove; for it has been accepted by acclamation, as of that genuine class of art which speaks to all ages and all nations; and its reproduction by every engraver of eminence in almost every country of Europe is a glorious ovation to its author.

He took high ground, also, in what the French term the *morale* of his art; he conceived it to be a sacred calling; that its followers were teachers of the pure worship of the beautiful; a religion whose hierarchs still speak to the world from the depths of hoar antiquity, and still breathe forth their refining precepts from the Parian stone fashioned by the hands of a Phidias or a Praxiteles; and from the more recent works of the gifted Raphael, still as fresh in the eloquence of their immortal preaching as when newly painted beneath the pure sky of Rome. Leopold longed to be one of these great preachers of the worship of the beautiful, with all its purifying and refining influences; and as a preparation for his sacred office, deemed that above all, purity of thought, purity of living, and intense devotion to the culture of the perception of that beauty, the excellence of which he sought to teach, were of the deepest necessity. In the profession and practice of these principles, and of his art, Leopold Robert exhaled a pure and refined existence, which may serve as a model, however unattainable in its excellence, to future cultivators of the refining duties of art.

In thus referring to continental art, one is led to compare generally its chief characteristics with our own. We shall find that the German school in its high but cold elevation—however certain to lead to more attractive results anon—occupies as yet, an isolated position—that the school of modern Italy is still lost in a frigid and servile classicism, and is powerless, while those of Holland and Belgium are too nearly allied to the French to require special notice.

The school of France, however, one with which we shall have to engage in a close struggle for excellence, has many analogies and aspirations common to our own.

In landscapes, interiors, and marine pieces, the various and distinct styles worked out by Stanfield, Roberts, Creswick, Linnel, Martin, Danby, and others, in some respects defy the rivalry of our neighbours, notwithstanding the glorious sea-pieces of Gudin, and the interiors of Isabey and Granet, and some of the landscapes of Cabat, Jules Dupré, Trojan, &c. &c., or the animals of Leuillier, whose “Christians abandoned to the Wild Beasts in a Roman Circus” created so much enthusiasm a few years ago. In pictures of cabinet size, treating of poetical, dramatic, or historical subjects, the names of Maclise, Herbert, Hook, Elmore, Frost, Cope, &c. are balanced by a list of French rivals of about equal excellence; for while they do not equal our school in colour, they surpass it in power of drawing, and in a certain finesse in the intellectual treatment of their subjects.

But while we maintain the struggle with credit in the class of art just described, in the highest walk of painting we are left far behind. Either the individual ambition of our artists is of a lower calibre, or the class of patronage is different, or our leading artists are, in most cases, a set of men less educated than the French, and consequently incapable of attempting the intellectual treatment of subjects in the same profound and magisterial spirit as their continental rivals.

Pickersgill's great picture, the “Samson and Dalilah,”* was a great work as to

* The cartoon competition brought much talent of a high class that was not suspected to exist; but nothing was produced capable of sustaining comparison with the highest efforts of the French school of art of that kind. Take, for instance, the solitary example of the “Hemicycle” by Delaroche, at the *École des Beaux Arts*.

manipulation and colour, and as a piece of masterly model painting; but there was no new intellectual grasp of the subject; and the same may be said of Etty's "Joan of Arc," which was, at the same time, full of such errors of drawing and proportion as the veriest tyro would have been ashamed of; these defects, it is true, were redeemed, if such redemption were possible, by splendour of execution and the magic of colour; but they ought not to exist in a work pretending to the rank of high art.

Similar observations may be urged against the very few other pictures of similar dimensions which our school has produced. For, after all, what have we done, since the noble efforts of Barry in the *Adelphi*, to compare to the "*Rêve de Bonheur*" of Papéty, or the "*Orgie Romaine*" of Couture? Assuredly nothing of the same high class. Barry had certainly preceded Papéty in his pictorial interpretation of "A Vision of the Happiness of a Future State of Existence," in which he makes the highest human aspirations attain their solution in the fields of Elysium. He has made the happy future of the legislator consist in a meeting of such as Lycurgus, Confucius, and Penn; such personal interchange of the ideas of widely distant ages, so extending the field of legislative vision, that questions of endless difficulty are solved in a moment, and the supreme happiness of the legislator consummated. So with the poet. Homer meets Dante, Chaucer, and Shakspeare—while the harmony of the spheres, which still remained unfathomed by Newton, is developed to him by an angel. But all this is more powerfully conceived than executed.

Not so with the works of Papéty. The ground taken up by the French artist is more manageable, perhaps more of "the earth, earthy," but its treatment is full of poetry in his hands. His "*Dream of Happiness*," his "*Rêve de Bonheur*," is an expression of the supremest happiness of which human life is susceptible in different natures, and at different epochs of life, represented by a number of distinct groups, skilfully wrought into a composition of wonderful elaboration; yet, so artistically contrived as to appear of the utmost simplicity. In one group, it is love—in another, art—in another, science—in another, the triumph of strength in athletic exercises—in another, the joy of the hunter—in another, the morbid ecstasy of the successful miser, or the frantic pleasure of the excited gambler.

The scene and costume are well conceived and simple, for they do not obtrude themselves; the epoch might be Greek—it might be Roman—it might be a scene among the Frankish Merovingians—or it might even be modern. So much does the purely intellectual dominate in the treatment of the subject, that the artist's conception of costume or appropriate accessories do not once occur to the spectator. He sees the lovers wandering beneath the shade of majestic trees in the deep twilight, feeling not even the beauty of the hour, so absorbed is each in the other. He sees the young astronomer, blind to the beauty of human eyes, while in the contemplation of the lights of heaven. He sees the young artist in the ecstasy of giving the last touches to the work which has occupied his dreams as well as his waking hours. He sees the triumphant eye of the successful soldier returning from the combat, and the victorious wrestler glorying in his strength. He sees the successful hunter prostrate with flashing eye and distended nostril, the vanquished boar,

foaming a vain defiance. He sees the gleaming eye of the miser reflecting the brightness of his hoarded gold, but fitfully watching lest some unexpected intrusion should endanger his possession. He sees the gambler, mad with the pleasure of hope in his last stake, which is sure to win back all, and more than repay, with a paroxysm of delight, moments, hours of despair. All this, and much more, is told in the picture of Papety, snatched too early from his profession, like the gifted Gericault, in the full tide of success.

Of such a class are the pictures, always above life size, to which the youthful artists of France devote their early years. Refusing lucrative offers of employment in less glorious channels of art, they devote the entire energy of youth to these great works, looking to fame alone, and treating profit as a matter below the attention of a true artist. With such feelings, many truly noble works have been produced, and, at the same time, many below mediocrity, when mistaken patronage interfered, as the galleries of Versailles so fully testify. I will only allude to one more work of this high class, that of Couture. We have seen how our clever countryman, Mr. Poole, has treated the "Goths in Italy." A few armed and fair-haired warriors, not too barbarous in appearance, lie about the slopes of an Italian garden, overlooking a beautiful bay. The Mediterranean gleams beneath them, the blue Italian sky above, and they are waited on by a noble Roman maiden, now a slave. This is all Mr. Poole has seen in his subject, or, at all events, thought proper to execute. It must be allowed, however, that what he has done, he has done well. But let us see how M. Couture has treated a similar theme; his "Orgie Romaine," is a banquet in the time of Roman decadence, when the stern virtues of the great republic were forgotten, and an oriental luxury, and debasing dissipation had usurped their place. The lines of Juvenal,

"——— sævior armis,
Luxuria incubit victumque ulciscitur orbem,"

would appear to have suggested the picture. The scene, as so well described by Gautier in one of his inimitable criticisms, passes in a vast apartment supported by columns of the Corinthian, or rather composite order, for Roman luxury has already overcharged with parasitic ornament and unnatural combinations the beautiful design of the Grecian capitals. The pale sky of morning is seen through the interstices of the architecture, a new day breaking upon the nocturnal revelry to show it all its vileness. Around, are statues of the elder Romans, frowning from their pedestals upon the degradation of their degenerate descendants; a lightning of indignation seems to shine even through their eyes of stone, and a bitter sarcasm seems to die upon the curled angle of their marble lips. How poetical is the invention of this phalanx of mute spectators of the scene. One daring youth, maddened with wine, mounts the pedestal of a Brutus or a Camillus, and insolently holds the wine cup to his silent lips. Thus has the artist united the interest of the spectator between the Romans of marble, and the Romans of flesh—the ancestor and his posterity—between the founders of an empire, and its destroyers. Women in dresses resplendent with embroidery, and worn carelessly at the end of the banquet, are gazing listlessly at the breaking light, or turning a careless ear to words of flattery addressed to them by

men as listless as themselves; others, of more robust organization, appear to resist the hour, the wine, the excess, defying even the retributive finger of dissipation. Beyond, is a group of elders, rosy, hilarious, clear-eyed, crowned with roses and with ivy, the victors of a hundred feasts, who have seen whole generations of vigorous youth sink into the grave of luxury. There, a band of girls and youth, evidently more devoted to the dance than the table, are still alert, and playfully dispute the possession of a wreath of flowers. The centre of the picture is occupied by a magnificent female figure—a once superb creature—whose beauty is already marked by the lines, while it yet defies the last effects, of dissipation. The style of her beauty is as of something nocturnal and voluptuous, and yet statuesque and magnificent—a Messalina in power, in vice, and in disdain of virtue. She leans carelessly on the shoulder of a man magnificently robed, who seems the Amphitryon of the banquet, and as she leans so proudly, with her fading, yet still glorious beauty, she might be a personification of Rome herself, conquered by pleasure, before a Gothic sword was drawn against her. Other figures equally characteristic abound, as well as innumerable rich and characteristic accessories. But enough has been said to show the grasp of intellectual power with which the work was conceived. I must not omit a final characteristic touch of great effect. In the shade of a projecting portion of the architecture, stand two figures, cynical, austere—perhaps the satirist and the historian—a Juvenal, and a Tacitus. They are evidently judges, and not actors in the scene. But this is left an enigma to the spectator; it is sufficient that he is impressed with the feeling, that the orgie has been sternly watched, by observers who will evidently not allow its vicious luxuries to pass without the just castigation of a biting record.

Pictures of this class, our school has not yet produced, or dreamed of. The views of our artists have been confined within comparatively narrow limits. The immense importance of mere “money position” in our country, deters the young artist from devoting the years of his prime of youth to the production of great works of monumental dimensions. He is driven at once to such as are suited to mere room furniture, of a high class, it is true, but which still leave their producers infinitely below the artistic rank justly assumed by MM. Papéty and Couture. In fact, with our present notions regarding pictures, and their fit destination, and the few purposes to which, as decorations, they can be applied, beyond, as I have said, mere furniture, it appears useless to hope that our artists will venture on such high ground, notwithstanding the example of their brothers of France. Till something is done here towards establishing an arena for the outpourings of a similar artistic ambition, we shall have our greatest artists pandering to print-shop speculations, and even our Landseers and their peers desecrating their pencils by the production of “Poor Doggies,” and the like; or worse, groups of singing children, labelled to catch the pseudo-pious, with such titles as “Lord have mercy upon us,” and other really blasphemous ticketing of the same class. But it is easier to decry than suggest improvements—easier to break down than to build up. So, not to point out a disease without suggesting a remedy, I will glance at the present state of public taste in such matters, and if it is found fit to relish a higher class of works, propose a mode of encouraging their production.

By some of the best and most enthusiastic advocates for establishing a national

school of high art, much has been said against such institutions as those termed "Art Unions." The result of the operations of these associations has, however, proved their immense utility. Their faults have been many, but perhaps unavoidable. They have issued bad prints, and have been the means of selling bad pictures; but the extensive inoculation of the middle classes, with a taste for art through their means, has been enormous and undeniable, and many, raised by their influence to a higher perception of art than can be gratified by such means, have deserted the ranks of the associations, and become patrons on their own account. That such has been the beneficial effect of these unions, combined with that produced by local exhibitions, who can doubt, when he sees our manufacturers of Birmingham, &c., giving thousand-guinea commissions for pictures to our leading artists? From the last-named fact, it appears evident that the public taste *is* fit to receive and admire works of the highest class, and also to pay for them. This mere private patronage, however, cannot, from other causes than mere insufficiency of money means, be effective beyond very limited bounds, on account of the ordinary dimensions of our domestic residences, even of the highest class.

In our great national buildings we cannot hope for much, as their decoration must long remain fettered by royal commissions, and other incumbrances of that kind, which, however liberal in their beginning, must, from their inherent nature, soon sink into a very narrow circle of favouritism, one-sided patronage, and even rank jobbing. We must, therefore, look to public efforts, quite unshackled by the influence of governmental patronage. I would suggest, therefore, the establishment of a number of institutions similar in constitution and principle to our most splendid club-houses; but instead of devoting the great means which are placed at the disposal of such clubs—to the object of luxuriously feeding the body—they should do that office for the mind; they should be *restaurants* to the intellect, nourishing it with the refinements of art, daily refreshing the soul with those exquisite feelings arising from the contemplation of the most perfect artistic works, and gently exciting it by continual fresh additions to the collection of the institution. The mission of "clubs" would then assume a somewhat higher character than in ministering to the fastidious appetites of gentlemen who are, through their means, enabled to get more flavour about their broiled chicken, and to sip their pint of chablis more delicately iced, than they could hope for either at their own homes, or at a respectable tavern.

Let us then imagine eight hundred gentlemen, or ladies, subscribing but six guineas a year, and we have at once an income of about £5,000. A builder could easily be found, willing to erect a suitable building, on being guaranteed five per cent. for his outlay; we will suppose this to be £10,000—a sum for which a very splendid and suitable edifice might be erected; the interest, or yearly rent, would thus amount to £500. The supply of all the works on art as they appeared, and all the leading periodicals, would consume another £500, leaving a clear surplus of £4,000 a-year, which should be exclusively devoted to the purchase of works of art. The attendance, and the keeping of the building always clean, and in perfect order, should be performed by the servants of a commercial *restaurateur* attached to the institution, who, in return for exclusively furnishing the members with any refresh-

ments required, of the first quality, and at tariff prices, should, as his rent, keep the building in order, and furnish all necessary attendance.

The members would thus, for a small subscription of six guineas annually, enjoy the luxury of a gallery of art, increasing every year at the rate of £4,000 worth, besides the voluntary donations of extra works by members, which would most certainly be considerable. Such a gallery, with the addition of a gradually growing library, and many other advantages easily perceived, would be an infinite advance upon the poor purposes to which the vast means of our great metropolitan clubs are at present applied, and might eventually lead to the gradual growth of numbers of palaces of art, each a Louvre in itself—a consummation by no means impossible or improbable, when we look back to the small list of works of art possessed by Francis I., who may be considered the founder of the magnificent French collections of the present day. That this idea, whether from my suggestion, or that of others, is destined to germinate, I am certain, and also that its results will, in a few years, fill our metropolis.

The opinion has latterly gained ground among artists, that the *governmental* patronage extended to art on the Continent, has been of signal service in developing its higher branches. But this conclusion is sufficiently disproved by the eight miles of painted canvas in the galleries of Versailles, as compared with works of French artists produced by independent exertion; whilst, if we turn to this country, where government patronage has been recently essayed to a limited extent, we shall find that the results have been equally unfortunate, the most recent example of its inefficiency being displayed in the silly and indiscriminate scattering of prize medals at the close of the Great Exhibition. I would, therefore, warn artists to look to a sounder arena than the regions of a court for the exercise of their talents. I would have them look to the rapidly increasing taste of our great industrials; to public institutions of strictly popular organization, such as I have described above, and to a true, honest, and independent love of art for itself, alone certain to lead to well-earned distinction and success. Let, I repeat, artists of all classes work out their career with these feelings, especially eschewing the hollow temptation of meretricious and ephemeral distinction acquired through courtly patronage, as a dangerous and destructive, though glittering bait.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

METAL WORK.

WHEN it is considered how important to our daily and hourly comforts are the household implements with which a knowledge of working in various metals has furnished us, we must at once be struck with the importance of human progress in the industrial arts. The bare comparison between the well polished fire-grate—the balance handled table-knife, or the well finished silver-spoon, with the wigwam fire of the savage, and the sharpened stone which serves him for a knife, suggest at once the condition of the immense chasm which has been passed in our onward progress, the beginning of which is still within the records of human knowledge. If then the rude beginning of all we have accomplished is still so recent as to be within the boundary of our imperfect records, how much may we not, as a race, hope to accomplish in the illimitable future, if we continue to work vigorously in the road of improvement.

We occupy, in comparison with the savage, a proud position in the arts of civilization; yet, if we look round, and critically ascertain how deficient are most of our household implements and appliances, in that species of *design* which constitutes beauty, and which should in all things lend its refining aid to embellish our existence, we shall find that till within five or six years, the last century has supplied no progress in that direction, and that its work has been confined exclusively to achieving great excellence in mere mechanical processes, in which a certain phase of perfection has been attained. The mere utilitarian application of industrial art has been carried to a wonderful extent, both in facility of production and in the excellence, mechanically speaking, of the products. But in the same period we shall not only find that the *artistic* element of industrial art, has not made a corresponding progress, but, on the contrary, that it has, during the last century, absolutely retrograded.

During that period, works in metal, with the exception of bronze statuary, cannot claim even a respectable place in art, in comparison with their positions in former periods. The works of the goldsmith even, had sunk into insignificance

at the close of the 18th century; and from iron and brass-work, anything like artistic or decorative feeling had entirely disappeared.

Now that art has once more began to shed its beautifying influence over the products of these branches of industry, it will be interesting to trace its earliest and subsequent progress in connexion with metal working.

That the metals were unknown to man within a period to which our records extend, is proved by both ancient and modern writers on the subject, and proved also, by the continual discovery, even in our own island, of weapons and various utensils formed of hard stone; a mode of reducing which to the required forms evidently preceded any acquaintance with the metals.

In our own time, too, races of men have been discovered, who were still in that primitive stage of knowledge, in which stone serves the purposes eventually transferred to gold, silver, bronze, iron, &c. Such were the natives of the islands of the Pacific, discovered by Captain Cook, and the natives of New Zealand and Australia.

The early stages of human civilization are more easily traced by reference to their weapons of war than by any other monuments; and archæologists have found it convenient to divide the early epochs of European civilization into "the age of stone," "the age of bronze," and the "age of iron;" for it is proved by many existing monuments that the use of bronze, for both offensive and defensive weapons, long preceded that of iron, as that of stone preceded bronze.

It would seem, that gold was the first metal discovered, which is easily conceived, as it is found in a nearly pure state, and is so malleable and ductile, that a mode of making use of it for ornamental purposes must soon have followed its discovery. That such was in fact the case is proved by some of our earliest written records; those of the Bible for instance, in which jewels of gold, vases, &c. are described as being in use as early as the time of Abraham, sometimes adjusted to certain weights so as to pass also for money, known by numismatists as "jewel money," for which purpose the large bracelets and massive torques of the Celtic nations, in more recent times, were also used.

Gold was once plentiful in Western Asia, and gold tripods and other votive gifts to temples in that metal, are mentioned at a very early period. Another proof of the knowledge of gold having preceded that even of silver, is the gold coinage of Asia Minor, the existing specimens of which are evidently of more ancient fabric than any silver coins known.

The discovery of silver, however, was doubtless not long in following that of gold; and it was probably soon used for decorative purposes by the ancients more frequently than gold, on account of its greater abundance. Pliny mentions that many had gained renown for chasing in silver, but none for chasing in gold; but that must be an exaggerated statement, as gold tripods, and other objects "more precious for their workmanship than even their material," are mentioned as early as the period of the last race of Lydian princes.

The discovery of copper was the next advance in the knowledge of the metals, soon followed by that of tin, &c., by the mixing of which with copper, bronze was

produced, long so extensively used for weapons and armour, previous to its employment for decorative purposes.

Iron, though perhaps the last discovered of the common metals, and very late in coming into general use, was nevertheless known, and occasionally used at a comparatively early period. There is a passage in Athenæus describing a vase presented by Alyattes, King of Lydia, to the Temple of Delphi, in the 6th century before the Christian era, the base of which was in wrought iron, richly chased with an elaborate design, consisting of minute figures of animals, insects, and plants, the work of Glaucus of Chios. Plutarch also mentions a work in iron, some three centuries later, as still considered remarkable in his time, namely, the highly-wrought helmet of Alexander, which he describes as shining like silver, a proof that even at that date iron was very rarely used for arms or armour, or the material of the helmet of Alexander would not be mentioned as unusual.

Many monuments might be cited, such as tripods, vases, pieces of armour, chariots, the chest of Cypselus, &c., made of gold or silver, or a combination of several materials, in which the precious metals formed a principal part, all of which have been minutely described by ancient authors; but many of the more ancient were doubtless, though perhaps elaborate, of very stiff archaic workmanship, as we may infer from the remark of Socrates, himself a sculptor, and a descendant of Dædalus, who is made to say that "if Dædalus himself could return to life, and produce works similar to those which pass for his, he would render himself ridiculous in the eyes of living sculptors;"—so great had been the progress in art between the (assumed) time of Dædalus and that of Socrates.

But nevertheless, previous to the time of Phidias (about 450 B.C.) the art of working in metal must have attained to comparative excellence, the names of several artists having been preserved as excelling in that branch of art, such as the Glaucus above-named, and Theodorus of Samos, who made the ring of Polycrates, and a celebrated golden vessel, which afterwards adorned the palace of the King of Persia.

The art of working in various metals had indeed become an especial vocation, termed the *Torreutic* art (*τορευτική*), and afterwards known to the Romans as *Celatura*, both terms being probably synonymous, though antiquarians draw nice distinctions, inferring that the *Torreutic* process consisted in fixing thin plates of the metal on to other substances, by means of holes and rivets, from *τορεύω*, to bore or pierce, while the Roman term referred rather to engraving, or chasing, from *celo*, to chase, and *cædo*, to cut.

Though, as I have said, metal work of a very complicated nature existed before the time of Phidias, it remained to the great Athenian sculptor to raise the art to the highest rank, which he did by his famous statues of Jupiter, and Minerva, partly executed in gold, and doubtless by other smaller works now forgotten. The intimate connexion of this art with statuary in the great artistic age of Greece is proved by the fact that several eminent sculptors were also chasers in silver, such as Myron and Pasitiles. The sculptor Mys engraved the battle of the Lapithæ with the centaurs on the shield of Phidias's colossal statue of Minerva.

About the time of Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander, works in silver and gold had become common luxuries, and in arms and armour the use of the

precious metals was profuse, as we learn incidentally from the name of the favourite cohort of Alexander, the *Argyraspides*, or silver shields, so named from their shields plated with silver. The Roman Emperor Alexander Severus, at a later period, not only imitated his Macedonian namesake in the array of a similar troop, which he called his *Argyroaspides*, but also surpassed that degree of luxury by the formation of a still more select corps, called the *Chrysoaspides*, or golden shields, as described by his biographer, Lampridius.

The first works both of gold, silver, or bronze, were produced either by hammering, or engraving, the invention of the art of *casting*, both in bronze and iron, being ascribed to Theodorus of Samos. The earliest bronze statue of Zeus, by Learchus of Rhigium, was formed of several pieces nailed together.

The great period of invention among the ancient races of Europe, appears to have been the three centuries which followed the age of Homer, during which Glaucus of Chios is said to have invented the art of soldering metals, and the brothers Telecles and Theodorus that of casting, in which they produced celebrated works by their then new process. The art of casting statues and other works in bronze was carried to its highest point by Polycleitus, the immediate successor of Phidias; but I must pass quickly over the subject of statuary, this chapter being more especially devoted to the progress of metal work in general.

I must not omit, however, to hint that the Rhodians established a positive trade in bronze statuary of the highest class; and when Pindar, in the figurative language of poetry, says "that the day the Rhodians dedicated a temple to Minerva, a shower of gold fell upon the island," he doubtless means that when those islanders successfully cultivated the arts patronised by that deity, they became rapidly wealthy, and it is well known that their merchants exported statues as an important branch of commerce, filling the cities of Alexandria, Jerusalem, and even the cities of Greece herself, and the more distant Rome, with the works of her great artists—a "trade" to which Pindar again alludes when he says that "Prometheus" (symbol of the genius which inspires sculptors) "has excited in the mind of the Rhodians a noble emulation, and the statues which they model spread themselves abroad among the cities, even like a crowd of mortals who walk the earth." So important an element of commerce may the fine arts become, when the enlightenment of a people has perceived not only their *beauty*, but their *use*.

How far the arts, when successfully cultivated, were capable of enriching countries, is abundantly shown by the recorded prices of celebrated works. Nicias, the Athenian leader, for instance, refused 60 talents (£13,000) for one of his pictures, which he afterwards presented to the state; and at Rome, Cæsar placed two pictures by Timomachus at the entrance of the Temple of Venus Genitrix, which had cost him 80 talents (above £17,000), while a picture by Aristides was purchased for 100 talents (£22,000). To which list of the price current of works of Grecian art, may be added the interesting fact that the state of Sicily paid off its "national debt" by the sale of its pictures.

The noble coinage of the Greeks exhibits in an unbroken series of examples, the progress of that people in working silver, gold, and copper, from the earliest period,

to the highest development of Grecian art—from the rude beginning, when the imperfection of their coining instruments only enabled them to produce an object in relief on one side of the coin, the other presenting the rude indent, caused by the punch—to the time when such exquisite impersonations, first of deities, and then of princes, formed the types of the coinage, as leads the archaologist to suppose that a race of artists was employed upon that class of art nothing inferior in skill to the more celebrated producers of sculpture upon a large scale.* That the art of die-sinking for the coinage was an important one, is proved by the recent discovery of some of the engravers' names, which occur on the noble Syracusan medallions, that of *Kimon* being the most frequent, especially on the fine pieces which have the head of *Proserpine* in magnificent relief on the obverse, and the quadriga, or four-horse chariot, on the reverse. In this branch of art the Grecian colonies of Sicily and south of Italy appear to have surpassed the mother country, especially in general elaboration and high finish, Athens especially among the states of Greece Proper never having cultivated the manipulation of the coinage, in an artistic point of view.

The metal work of the Greeks consisted in various other classes of manufacture, or rather art, for the character of their productions was so high and artistic, and of such careful elaboration, that they cannot be classed with what we now term manufactures. Among the works mentioned by cotemporary writers are caskets and vases, formed of rare woods, richly mounted in gold and silver, highly decorated with profuse chasing and embossing, and also a kind of inlaying, which may have much resembled our modern damascene work. The patterns on vases and other vessels in general consisted of geometrically designed borderings, and more rarely of foliage, enriched with animals, &c. Arms and armour generally bore for ornament the delineation of battles, or contests of *athletæ*, either engraved or embossed, and in some cases, both in armour as well as in vases and other ordinary vessels, the designs were made separate, and rivetted on, the objects in relief being frequently gold, fastened on a silver ground, a method of ornamentation referred to in the prosecution of the Roman *Prætor Verres*, who so abused his powers during his government of Sicily as to call down the public indignation so finely expressed in the pleadings of *Cicero*. *Verres*, it would appear, though a greedy, was not a very accomplished amateur of art, and generally took with him a Greek sculptor and a painter to advise him which statues, which pictures, or which highly-wrought vases were best worth his appropriation. By the advice of these worthies, he sometimes only removed the raised ornaments from rich cups or vases, causing them to be fixed on vessels of his own; thus evading the accusation of taking the vases themselves.

In less artistic but equally elaborate works, the Egyptians and even the Assyrians were expert artizans. Many curious Egyptian works exist in our museums; and we shall shortly, through the labours of *Layard*, be able to look upon the throne of the Assyrian king, and judge for ourselves of the cunning workmanship of the goldsmiths of Nineveh and Babylon. That the most celebrated Grecian works in armour, vases, &c., were the work of great artists, is certain; but that such things were also

* See my work on "Ancient Coins and Medals."

produced as branches of mere manufacture is equally on record; for the orator Lysias had a manufactory of shields which occupied twenty slaves, and Demosthenes inherited a "sword manufactory" from his father, which was worked by thirty slaves, and a "bed manufactory" which employed twenty, in which last, a great quantity of ivory, copper, iron, and ebony was used.

It is, however, to be presumed that the really fine works of art, as above suggested, were generally the production of independent artists; but it is probable, at the same time, that even the bedsteads of the manufactory of Demosthenes and his competitors, for it is not to be supposed that he had all the trade to himself, were occasionally highly artistic productions; for it is impossible to conceive that the 3000 statues by the greatest artists of Greece, which decorated the temples and public places of Athens, should not have exercised a remarkable influence upon the taste of her artizans; whose ancestors had heard the maxims of Socrates, inculcating above all things the admiration of the beautiful, when he preached its culture to Athenian artists of all classes, propounding to Pistias, the armourer—to Parrhasius, the painter—or to Aristippus, the philosopher, that abstract beauty may exist in all things, of however various form and purpose; and that the principle of beauty in a beautiful and accomplished woman, in a helmet, in a drinking cup, or a richly-wrought cuirass, was one and the same thing, and that the forms of all those different objects (if perfect) were subject to the same law.

Still, the smaller productions of great artists must have been of a higher character than any works produced in manufactories, and by the hand of slaves, and when, as we know they did, the chisels and the gravers, of such men as Ariston, Calliades, Mys, Stratonicus, Euphorion, and Critias, were used to chase a drinking cup, to emboss a sword sheath, or to damascene a helmet, or when Euphorion, the especial sculptor of colossal statues, occasionally amused his leisure with carving a miniature vase, the works so produced must have been almost above price, and have formed the luxuries of princes, or found a place among the sacred treasures of rich temples.

It was to such a "manufacturer" that Anacreon addressed his well-known ode; in which he exclaims, "Excellent artist, carve me on this cup the beautiful Bathyllus, pressing forth the wine from luxurious grapes, along with the youthful Bacchus, and with Cupid."

But among the finely-organised Greek race, there was another class, less *exigeant* than poets, and less rich than princes, whose artistic instincts had to be gratified. Theocritus and other pastoral poets have described the delight with which the Grecian shepherd beheld the rich chasing of a drinking cup, and how such objects became the prizes for which they contended in their pastoral songs. Such cups were, doubtless, originally carved in wood by the shepherds themselves, to beguile the weary watchings of their flocks, as the modern Giotto traced the image of his dog on a piece of stone while he watched his sheep among the Apennines, but at a later period the workshops of Athens, of Corinth, of Sicyon, of Rhodes, and such establishments as the bed manufactory of Demosthenes, furnished the bulk of the people with their artistic luxuries; while the great and independent

artists worked exclusively for the rich and powerful. As when we find the celebrated Lysippus chasing a cup for the King Cassander, expressly to drink the wine of Mendes. Such, too, was the cup of Hercules, mentioned by Athenæus, upon which the siege of Troy was represented, and which also bore the inscription "Parrhasius made the design, Mys engraved it; I represent the high Ilion, which the Greeks overthrew."

The love of decorative vases was carried to excess by the dilettanti of Greece, and more than seventy-two sorts of drinking cups are described by Athenæus, each having a distinctive name. Among those celebrated for the love of richly-wrought vases, the Ptolemies are remarkable for the luxury in which they indulged, and the patronage of this branch of art was extraordinary; while the Arcadian Pithias caused it to be inscribed on his tomb that he had possessed more vases than any other man.*

With such incitement it is not difficult to conceive that the arts and manufactures flourished in Greece. They even outlived her political prosperity, and retained their supremacy even after the deluge of barbarism that swept away the Roman Empire in the West. Greece was the last province that remained to the emperors of the East, and even as late as the 11th century we find her workshops still busy in the creation of industrial wealth, and those great and eternal axioms of beauty which guided her first great artists, still ruling to a great extent the Greek art of the dark ages. For the helmets and shields manufactured at that late period by her armourers, still perpetuated the classic forms of the helm and shield of Minerva that were modelled by the hand of Phidias.

The Romans, at an immeasurable distance, followed a similar course to the Greeks in their style of working silver and gold utensils and ornaments. Influenced by the style of art which prevailed in the cities of Magna-Grecia, and also by that of Etruria, where the working of copper or rather bronze had attained to such excellence that Etruscan candelabra were prized even at Athens, Roman art exhibited peculiarities which occasionally possess a certain largeness and grandeur of manner not always found even in Grecian works.

The eventual style of design in the industrial arts of Rome, when it assumed a definite character after the firm establishment of the empire, may be said to have been founded upon the arts of all nations: the spoils of Africa, and of the temples of Egypt, the riches of Asia, even the golden vessels and elaborate decorations of the temple of Jerusalem, forming part of the artistic treasure which served to form the taste of the Roman Empire. On the arch of Titus, raised to commemorate his return from the conquest of the country of the Jews, the seven-branched candlestick, and the sacred vessels of the temple, were carved in high relief, and those carvings are still perfect, forming one of the most remarkable objects that attract the attention of the wanderer in the ruined forum of the eternal city. But he may purchase there a still more striking memorial of the fall of Jerusalem, from itinerant vendors of ancient coins, a class of traders seldom without a specimen of the coinage of Vespasian struck to commemorate that event, on which Judea is sometimes personified as a weeping figure at the feet of the Emperor, beneath the

* Many were doubtless works of pottery, which I shall allude to in speaking of fictile wares in general.

famous inscription "Judea capta." Indeed the Roman coinage offers, perhaps, even a more interesting series of metallic monuments, than that of Greece and her colonies; for in addition to the three or four hundred authentic portraits of the emperors and their wives and children, such historic events as Judea capta, Ægypta capta, and a vast number of others, are recorded on the coinage of the Roman Empire, some of which have no other record.

The decorative arts, as exhibited in finely-wrought objects of gold and silver, appear to have been much cultivated in Italy, both before and after Roman supremacy; and the modern Roman museums are full of specimens, especially that formed by Gregory XIV. which contains a superb collection of ancient gold jewellery, indiscriminately termed Etruscan. Some of it is undoubtedly of Etruscan workmanship, of both early and late date, found in the tombs of Etruria, but a portion belongs no doubt to other parts of Italy, and much, probably, to the great capital itself, whither artists and artizans, from all the provinces of the empire, flocked for employment. Among these interesting remains of ancient art, the metallic mirrors are conspicuous, for it would seem that although glass was known in Rome, even before the foundation of the empire by Augustus, yet the art of converting it into mirrors was not brought to perfection, and highly polished metallic plates served this purpose, some of which are most elegantly ornamented; but those of foreign workmanship, especially Corinthian, appear to have been preferred to such as were of native fabric. The gold ornaments in the Roman museums are very various in character, and some of them so delicately constructed, of such thin leaves of gold, as makes their perfect preservation truly marvellous.

In Greece, very few remains in the form of minute jewellery have been found, while in Italy they are abundant, and the national museums, as I have said, contain vast accumulations full of interest to the student of art and its history. Among these we may examine endless examples of the fibula or brooch, sometimes more nearly resembling a buckle, by which the two ends of the scarf were fastened over the chest, some of them of most exquisite design; some as light and delicate as the filagree work of modern Genoa, while others are solid and massive, and enriched with deep chasing. Here too, we find endless varieties of the armilla or bracelet, which was a favourite ornament with the ladies of Rome, as it had been among the Medes and Persians, both men and women; and from the East, the custom travelled not only through Greece to Rome, but through Thrace and the Germanic countries to Gaul, and even Britain, where it was constantly worn by the warriors of every tribe; sometimes round the neck, and sometimes round the arm. By the Celts these ornaments were called *torques*, and the Roman, Manlius, who slew a Gaulish chief, and took from him his torque, received the surname of Torquetus; and on coins struck by his family towards the end of the Republic, a torque of the description still frequently found even as far west as Ireland, is made to form the bordering of the coin in commemoration of the victory of their ancestor.

In addition to the armillæ and fibulæ, we find in the Gregorian and other collections, earrings, necklaces, and ornaments for the hair, the latter frequently

formed of extremely thin plates of gold, forming a wreath of leaves and flowers executed with a taste and finish very similar to that which might be exhibited by a modern Parisian manufacturer of artificial flowers, if compelled to work with gold instead of gauze.

That great extravagance of taste, both in the quantity and the form of gold ornaments, marked the period of the decline of Roman power, we may infer from passages in the writings of the later poets and historians, and the magnificent collection of gold monuments, principally belonging to the decline of the western empire, in the museum at Vienna, on which a special work has been recently published, exhibit the style of art which then prevailed—a sad decline from the better works of a former period. The power of seizing with artistic energy the proportions and poetic symmetry of the human figure was lost, and a stiff and crude imitation of the most obvious forms took its place. The representation of foliage and animals, so exquisite in former periods, had declined in the same way, while the introduction of elaborate geometrical patterns supplied the deficiency of the more truly artistic features, by imparting an intricate richness which required little more of the artist than mechanical skill in the neat and regular execution of set patterns.

This is the style that continued through the dark ages, as they have been termed, from the 5th to the 9th centuries, the artists of Greece and the Eastern capital, Constantinople, alone displaying some degree of art in the higher branches of design.

When Theodoric, the King of the Visigoths, reigned at Toulouse, he boasted that the rich vessels of gold and silver which decorated his tables, were the production of native workmen, proving that the separation from Rome had already begun, in France at least, to give rise to a race of native artists. In the 6th century St. Eloi, the patron saint of Goldsmiths, became celebrated for his productions in metal work. Born in 588, near Limoges, always celebrated as a seat of art, especially enamel work, Eloi imbibed there his first knowledge in goldsmiths' work. He was early employed by Clotaire II., and afterwards wrought a magnificent throne of solid gold for Dagobert II., by whom he was made moneyer and treasurer. After rising rapidly in church preferment and riches, and founding many monasteries, he died in 659, and was canonised. From this period up to the time of Charlemagne, and his immediate successors, the designs of the metal workers continued to exhibit very much of the debased Roman or Byzantine character, and many monuments of these epochs are preserved in the national collections of France. The successors of Charlemagne neglected native art, and the chronicles of the time inform us that the swords enriched with diamonds, the jewels and the rich furniture of the Carlovingian princes, after the founder of the race, were all imported from the East, or from Greece or Italy.

In England we have but few remaining monuments to reveal to us the state of art in metal working from the 9th to the 11th centuries; but that it was not lost, we know. The abundant series of coins of the Saxon race, though rude and inferior to those of the continent, yet display a certain amount of knowledge of the art, while a few such curious remains as the fibula or brooch, called the jewel of Alfred, show that enamelling on metal was understood, and the celebrity of St. Dunstan as a worker in metals is too well known to require enlarging upon. The

proficiency, however, of that prelate in the industrial arts is not an isolated fact, either in England or on the continent. The development of the feudal system, and the oppressions of petty chieftains independent of the sole monarch, then but a shadow of a power, drove the goldsmith, and even the blacksmith, into the monasteries, the only secure refuge from the robber nobles who for several centuries carried on a systematic succession of plunderings difficult now to conceive. Not only were artificers of all kinds found only among the monks, who thus drew all the wealth of a state into the monasteries ; but import and export trade was also paralysed, as it was unsafe to travel with articles of any value, in consequence of the depredations of the noble robbers ; till, to remedy the evil to some extent, fairs were established, all comers to which were guaranteed safe arrival and departure by powerful chiefs or princes, on payment of certain fees ; the celebrated fair of St. Denis being one of the first established. But as ancient towns and cities gradually recovered from the shock of successive invasions, plunderings, and revolutions, and asserted their claims to, and obtained, chartered rights, a power rapidly grew up, to form a counterpoise to that of the feudal aristocracy, and the industrial arts again began to flourish among the people, notwithstanding the efforts of Geoffry, Bishop of Auxonne, who, seeing the profession of art extending among the people, sought to retain it within the pale of the church by bequeathing prebends to such ecclesiastics who should apply themselves to the culture of painting, goldsmiths' work, glass making, or other arts which might serve to embellish sacred architecture.

The ridiculous opinion entertained towards the close of the 10th century, that the end of the world was at hand, and that the completion of the millennium after the birth of Christ would witness the dissolution of all things, caused all the arts of life to be entirely neglected for a time. Even churches were abandoned half finished, and a sombre fanaticism seemed to weigh upon and darken the whole of Christendom. But with the commencement of the 11th century a period of reaction opened. The foundations of most of the vast cathedrals of Europe were laid at that epoch, and in France magnificent doors of bronze were cast for some of those splendid structures, which were extraordinary works for that day, even if modelled and cast by workmen brought from Constantinople.

The state of art in France, in the middle of the 11th century, was introduced to England by the Norman invasion, previous to which the English were, no doubt, much in arrear of the continent.

Some of the most remarkable metal work of this epoch is to be found in bronze doors, and other works of that class, executed in Greece, in Constantinople, in Italy, and also in France ; while in Sicily, the Normans there established, imported colonies of Greek artizans from the islands of the Archipelago, for the express purpose of founding a school of art. To the larger works in bronze may be added the reliquaries for the preservation of the bones of saints, and other relics, which were generally made in the form of a church of the period, richly ornamented with niches, in which were miniature statues, stiffly but neatly executed, the whole frequently enriched with enamel, or precious stones. Highly wrought book-covers too, of bronze, and even of gold and silver, were executed to preserve copies of the Gospels, then

frequently written in letters of gold, a fine example of which custom is preserved in the British Museum, under the name of the *Codex Aureus*. Such reliquaries, and rich covers for the sacred volume, were made by the artizans of France, and even Germany and England; but the finer works of Italy and Greece, though themselves in a stiff and peculiar style, were superior in art to those of Western and Northern Europe.

At that time, when the means of rapid intercommunication of countries, so excellently established by the Romans, had been destroyed, and no new means developed as yet to supply the loss, England and France were as separate from Greece or Asia Minor, as they are now from the Antipodes; and separate countries, consequently, developed their arts and customs in strikingly different channels. The Moors in Spain and the North of Africa established a peculiar school of art, brought from Asia, which descended into all minor objects of their manufacture, and yet did not extend, in any of its characteristics, materially beyond the limits of the countries they occupied; and thus, while the Greeks of the Morea and the adjacent islands continued to make arms and armour similar to those worn by a Themistocles or an Alcibiades, in the more western countries of Europe a species of chain armour was worn, formed of a shirt, &c., of iron rings, the only solid piece being the conical helmet, also of iron; for about the period of the fall of the Roman empire of the West, bronze seems to have been gradually superseded by iron as a material for arms and armour.

Pieces of plate were gradually added to the chain armour, such as knee pieces, elbow caps, &c., till at the close of the 14th century, the entire suit of plate armour was produced; one of the most excellent, complete, and efficient productions of human ingenuity that the industrial art of any age has perfected. The complete suit of plate armour of the highest period, when the armourer was indeed an artist, is, in fact, a masterpiece of skill; every joint, every plate, having its particular technical name, and its especial use, and each being forged, formed, and decorated with most exquisite skill and taste. The end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th century was the most decorative period in this as in most other industrial arts, and the suits of armour ornamented by the hand of such masters of the period as Benvenuto Cellini and others, remained not only unsurpassed, but are as yet unequalled specimens of the art of working in iron, gilding, and inlaying in exquisite arabesque devices of gold and silver. Many of the shields, swords, breastplates, helmets, &c., executed for Charles V., whose taste for rich armour was one of his greatest weaknesses, are still preserved in the royal armoury of Madrid, and are exquisite models of design and execution.

The following century witnessed the gradual decrease of the use of defensive armour, but the portions still retained were yet more richly, though not so artistically decorated. Some of the pieces of armour attributed to Henry II. of France, are of very magnificent character, exhibiting richly embossed devices in steel upon a gold ground, which produces a very gorgeous and striking effect.

The suit of armour in the plate illustrating this branch of the subject was evidently, from the size, made for a child, and is not only richly gilt, but also enamelled with rich purple in a very elaborate and magnificent manner. The other

objects in the same plate show what abundance of clever and minute design was lavished upon works of this description by the armourers of the 15th and 16th centuries.

In following out the course of progress of defensive armour, I have advanced beyond the era at which I was discussing the general progress of the arts employed in metal work in general. It will be sufficient, however, on retracing our steps, to state briefly that the arts of design in all works of metal followed a very similar course to that described in treating of architectural decorations in a former chapter. The rich and complicated scrollings of the 11th and 12th centuries departed more and more from the still lingering reminiscences of classical art, and the elegant originality of the 13th century prepared the way for the angular feeling of the pointed Gothic. In the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries rich reliquaries, elaborate gospel covers, and minutely and profusely ornamented crosiers, remain as monuments to illustrate those transitions in art.

During the earlier portions of these periods rich designs were almost exclusively confined to such works as were destined to ecclesiastical purposes, and, indeed, laws were passed with a view to confine them to that channel; for the crusades, injudicious commercial regulations, and the banishment of the Jews, who possessed nearly all the commercial capital of Europe, had so drained the principal states of money, that it was forbidden to manufacture silver or gold objects of more than the weight of a mark, except for the churches.

Among the most prominent names that have been preserved as skilful workers in metal from the 11th to the end of the 13th centuries is that of Raoul, the goldsmith of Philip III., the first man of the third estate who obtained letters of nobility. The 14th century is the epoch of "high Gothic," when the angular feeling, and the development of interlacing tracery reached its climax. Of this epoch we have rich chalices and other vessels, wrought with such minute and wonderful elaboration as no modern work can surpass, and which must have suggested to Chaucer the line referring to the dress of Dido, which he describes as "rough with jewels."

The best works of the 15th century, nevertheless, excel those of the 14th, in a freer feeling in foliated ornaments, in a less stiff treatment of the human figure, and in a higher phase of general artistic feeling. The 15th century is indeed the most striking epoch in the history of the modern industrial arts. It is a period when the great artists of the day began to perceive the grand simplicity of the classical styles, as a principle, without slavishly following out all their details; and when arabesque ornament, and a graceful and yet somewhat decorative treatment of the human figure attained their utmost development, and delicate manipulation had reached to its most exquisite degree of finish.

Among the goldsmiths, bronzists, and workers of other metals at the close of the 15th and beginning of the 16th century, we find such names as that of the great Donatello, the sculptor, who was also a goldsmith. His works belong to the middle of the 15th century, and yet, like those of his cotemporary, Brunelleschi, also a goldsmith, have not been surpassed by those of the great artists who followed half a century later. Next appears Andrea Verocchio, the master of Perrugino, who, in his

turn, became the master of Raphael, and is said to have produced *marvellous things* in gold. Raphael Borghini says, "*Faceva in quell' arte cose maravigliose.*"* Then appears Ghiberti, the famous author of the bronze gates of the Florentine Baptistery, and Finiguerra, the great artist in *niello*, whose works gave rise to the modern invention of engraving; and last of the great race of Florentine goldsmiths of the period, the well-known Benvenuto Cellini, whose elaborate and splendid works are too well known to require description. In Germany, Flanders, and Holland, Albert Durer, Lucas von Leyden, and Israel von Mechenen, designed and wrought most elaborate pieces of gold and silver plate, the recently-published copies of which have been of the highest use to our rising race of designers in that branch of industrial art. After this period, from the great encouragement afforded by the French King, Francis I., and his immediate successors, France took the lead in artistic works in gold and silver, having learned from the Italians the higher branches of the art. For Cellini tells us that when he arrived in France, he found the French goldsmiths very expert in the more ordinary branches of metal work, but not one among them capable of putting together and soldering the members of a statue.

But the arts of the sculptor and the designer were rapidly acquired by the French goldsmiths. The necklace and some other jewels of Diana of Poitiers show the excellence of the jewellers of that period, and Stephen de Laulne, under Henry IV., and the two Germaines, Le Pautre, and others, under Louis XIV., brought the gold and silver plate of France into the highest repute.

The plate given in illustration of gold work is from one of the florid designs of Le Pautre, who evidently formed his style mainly on that of the Italian designer, Polidore Caravaggio, modifying it with the prevailing taste brought into vogue by the painter, Le Brun. The designs of Le Pautre, critically judged, are full of defects; they have not the chaste simplicity of the antique, nor the refined quaintness and crisp elegance of the *cinque-centisti*; but they have a certain magnificence of form, which, with their high reliefs, and great variety of surface, seem especially suited to metal work, where a certain glitter, a certain gorgeousness of effect, appears almost preferable to forms over-refined by delicacy of design and execution, which have their more fitting domain in the subdued tones of bronze or marble.

After this period, which extended beyond the beginning of the 18th century, the industrial arts rapidly declined in artistic character.

In England, at the close of the 15th and the opening of the 16th century, the artistic branches of the industrial arts appear to have sunk very low, and we find foreign artists almost exclusively employed upon great works. The splendid iron enclosure to the tomb of Edward IV. at Windsor, is said to have been the work of a Flemish smith, the Flemings having acquired great excellence in iron work, as many of the richly-wrought balconies of some of the older buildings in Brussels, Ghent, and Antwerp fully attest; and *wrought* iron decorations of that description, of very elaborate character, are still manufactured in those cities, where the art has never been entirely abandoned. Many specimens of locks, knockers, &c.,

* Raph. Borgh. "Il Riposo," p. 519.

curiously wrought in iron, of rich design, were, however, recently shown at the Exhibition of Mediæval Art in the Adelphi, proving that such works were also produced by English artizans, though we find Torricelli, Jean of Procida, and other foreigners employed in more important public works in the reigns of Henry VII. and VIII. In the latter reign Holbein made designs for our jewellers, and many of the original drawings—exquisite specimens of elegant invention—are still preserved in the British Museum.

Many curious and beautiful chalices of gold and silver are still preserved in our colleges and guilds, which belong to the period of the 16th and 17th centuries, and the beginning of the 18th; but among such monuments, as date previous to the civil wars of Charles I., great havoc was made during that contest. First, great part of the plate of the colleges was melted down to assist the royal cause, and afterwards the royal collection itself, containing both British and foreign specimens of great beauty, was ordered by the republican government to be coined into current money, though it was represented to them at the time that the objects were much more valuable for their exquisite workmanship than for their mere intrinsic value as gold and silver. Many of the works then destroyed, and also of those still existing in our colleges, were no doubt of native workmanship; and that we had native goldsmiths of eminence, the name of Heriot and others is sufficient to attest; to which might be added, did space allow, a long list from the records of the Goldsmiths' Company. But that the goldsmiths, and chasers, and engravers in metal of the continent were very superior in the higher classes of work, we may infer from their employment in the national coinage. Charles I., for instance, appointed Nicholas Briot to the management of the artistic departments in the Mint, under whose instructions our own celebrated Simon acquired his eminence as a die engraver, in which branch of art he has never since been surpassed. But Charles II., led away by the general superiority of foreign artists, overlooked the claims of Simon, and appointed the De Roetters to the post of die sinkers in the Mint. It is well known that on the accession of the Hanoverian line, the British money of George I. was very inferior in execution to that of his petty continental dominions.

NIELLO AND ENAMEL.

In tracing as nearly in chronological order as I found it possible the general progress of working in metal, I have not till now found space to speak of niello. The term niello is, no doubt, an Italian abbreviation of *nigellus* (black). The art consists in engraving a design, in deep lines, on silver or gold, and filling up the sunken lines with a species of black enamel which, when polished, exhibited the design with beautiful distinctness. The art appears to have been practised between the 7th and 10th centuries, and in the 13th to have been in very general use in some places, as a collection of various objects, richly decorated with niello, has been discovered in a

church in Central Italy, which evidently belong to that period. But the revival of the art by the celebrated Florentine goldsmiths of the 15th century has caused its invention to be attributed to them. Maso Finiguerra was the artist who more especially devoted himself to this class of work. A beautiful example, possibly by this artist, is now in the British Museum. It is a *pax*, an object used in Roman Catholic church ceremonial for receiving the "kiss of peace." The niello portion is a silver plate, partly inlaid with gold, to represent the glories, &c., the subject being the adoration of the Magi. The framework is of silver gilt, richly enamelled with green and purple. Many of Finiguerra's works are very elaborate, and the annexed plate, supposed to be executed by him in his earlier style, and also representing an adoration of the Magi, will convey a good idea of the general effect produced by the process. It has evidently been executed for the purpose of being inlaid within a border of some other style of work, as the rivet marks indicate, and formed probably the central portion of a rich book-cover.

The smaller specimens in my plate were apparently intended for knife handles, or for insertion in ivory work in the rich caskets which were used for jewels at that period. Finiguerra was followed by Cellini, Raiboldi, Rossi, Perigrini, and Francia, the master of Marc Antonio, one of the first engravers, as we now understand the term. It was indeed the practice of niello which immediately gave rise to the modern art of engraving, the discovery of which happened in the following manner :—It was usual with the niellatori to rub black into their engravings to ascertain whether they were perfect, and while a plate was thus charged with black, it is related of Finiguerra that, on one occasion, he placed it accidentally face downwards, upon damp linen ; which having been covered by some other household article, a pressure was produced, which caused a perfect repetition of the design to appear on the linen. This was the hint from which the race of modern engravers rapidly arose, whose art it is not my purpose to trace here, as it is more especially one of reproduction than origination.

One of the most beautiful specimens of niello is the *pax* executed by Finiguerra for the church of St. John, at Florence, in the year 1452 ; but many of larger dimensions are known, especially some magnificent book-covers, mentioned by Cigonara. The application of this art to modern silver and plated work might be made with great advantage, as the effect of design, and of light and shade is produced without *inequality of surface*, which, as greatly facilitating cleaning, and indeed preventing the possibility of the accumulation of any kind of dirt, renders it much better suited to table plate of every description, than decoration by means of embossing or chasing. The art has been already applied by the Russians, with such great success, to snuff-boxes and other small articles, as shows its capacity for many other purposes.

The same may be said of enamelling in various colours upon metal—an art greatly neglected, but which might be made a superb, as well as convenient, means of decorating articles of plate. The enamel workers of Limoge were celebrated as early as the 6th century, and works of enamel upon metal, such as clock dials, &c., are produced at the present day ; but its artistic application as a means of decoration

of rich and durable character in the industrial arts, has fallen into disuse. Many suggestive specimens exist, however, from the well-known jewels of Alfred and Dagobert, and the rich book-covers of the 11th century, and to candlesticks, and other small works of both English and continental fabric, as late as the beginning, even the middle, of the last century. As suggestive example I give the annexed plate of a Russian enamelled vase.

In the specimens of caskets, cups, ewers, &c., exhibited in the Crystal Palace, by Messrs. Morel, the introduction of enamel has been essayed with good effect, and some exquisite *morceaux*, founded on mediæval models, have been produced by them. But the splendid set of chessmen exhibited in the Zolverein department, eclipse all rivalry in the delicate addition of colour to gold and silver by means of enamel.

The attention bestowed by the French artizans from the time of Louis XIV. forward, upon the decoration of ornamental clocks with ormolu and bronze ornaments, and upon mountings and inlayings in rich furniture, have given them the command of a lucrative commerce in those branches of industrial art, which even now, when the last ten years have done so much towards renovating artistic taste in our manufactures, we have not dreamt of rivalling.

The great international exhibition has, however, demonstrated to the world that if we are inferior in the *artistic* department of nearly all metal works, we are, at all events, greatly in advance of our rivals in all the *mechanical* processes connected with that branch of industry. Our cutlery, without any pretension to artistic design, is so truly wrought, and the temper of the steel is so excellent, that it is at once preferred to the more tastefully and artistically finished articles produced by France or Belgium, our only rivals, for the cutlery of other European countries is left at an immeasurable distance, and the specimens of some of the common classes of work from Austria are perfectly ludicrous in their rudeness.

In cast brass work we are again pre-eminent, and our brass-founders, in their metal bedsteads, and rich stoves, or grates, and fenders, with their fire implements, are far beyond all competition, though the hand of French modellers is visible in much of the best ornament attached to their works.

In silver plate, of a certain class, we are also pre-eminent, and the application of the "electro" principle, as it is now technically termed, by which a coating of silver is deposited upon copper work through the medium of electric action, has been carried to such a pitch of excellence by the Messrs. Elkington, as to defy competition. The only objection to be adduced to the display made by these enterprising manufacturers is, that all their best specimens are actual reproductions either of classical or of mediæval models, and their attention should be called to the excellent productions of Winkelmann and Sussman of Berlin.

In our specimens of presentation plate, race cups, &c., we exhibit original designs by native artists, some of which are very excellent; and if they do not always equal French designs in the clever treatment of the human figure, in

which the modelling of our Gallic neighbours is so spirited and correct, yet we sometimes, in our silver work, approach them even in that respect; for the splendid epergne exhibited by Messrs. Hunt and Roskill has little to desire in the modelling of the figures.

In rich chalices for church service, either simply engraved or enriched in various ways, Messrs. Hardman and others have produced some truly artistic works; but they are all too servilely copied from well-known forms, an objection which applies also to the exquisite specimens of damascening in works of this class, contributed by Belgium.

The Russian department exhibits specimens of gilt candelabra, and brass or gilt mountings of malachite objects, in a much more dangerous form of rivalry to our brass-founders than the French, inasmuch as they present many original and national characteristics of design not found in the works of the same class of our neighbours; and the same remark applies to the specimens of gold and silver work from the same quarter.

In iron casting nothing appears to surpass that exhibited in our grates and other chimney appurtenances; except the specimens of Berlin iron casting, from colossal statuary down to minute jewellery, to which the specimens from our Colebrook Dale works are immeasurably inferior, especially in articles pretending to an artistic character.

Though it is seen that in metal work of utilitarian character, and in silver plate even of a higher class, we surpass all rivals, we shall find that when artistic feeling becomes an essential character, we are left far, far behind. The small brooches, bracelets, caskets, elaborate alto-relievo of artistic character for porte-monnaie, or cigar cases, and other small objects, in oxydized silver, exquisitely modelled by designers of first-rate ability, worthy successors of Cellini or Pilon, place the French at the head of that class of art. In their clocks and chimney candelabra they are equally pre-eminent, some modern French works of that kind being worthy to be placed in museums for preservation as exquisite monuments of the arts of the 19th century. In *bronzes d'art*, as they have termed the best class of their statuettes in bronze, the French have equally distanced all competitors, the ateliers of Florence being far outdone by those of Paris. The works of their own existing artists in this class of art, as well as some of their reproductions of the finest monuments of antique sculpture, are truly admirable specimens of modern skill, and the moderate price at which these beautiful works are produced brings within the domain of commercial art, as an article of common trade, such works as would, even in the last century, have been confined to the galleries of the wealthy.

It is evident that English artizans require as yet great artistic culture, but it is fast coming, and as we see the ranks of art of the classes termed "fine" fast filling with men of real and original genius, we may hope to induce many from the over-filled columns to turn their attention to the creation of beautiful designs, calculated to raise the artistic character of the industrial arts in this country, and impart to them those qualities, the want of which has alone excluded them from markets which their sound, conscientious, and durable fabrication would otherwise command.

There is a new, and great, and lucrative career open to inventors, designers, and

producers of all branches of metal work of the highest class, which, it is to be hoped, the great stimulus of the late international and peaceful contest will induce many to enter.

I have placed my chapters on architecture; sculpture, and painting before those on industrial art, because, without the former, the latter could not exist—without the school of painting in Paris, the scarcely less distinguished school of design of Lyons could not flourish. Our great manufacturers must therefore become, as they are beginning to be, the true patrons of art, and the purchasers of its greatest works. The parasitic patronage of art by the wealthy drones of the hive, bears no fruit, but its encouragement by our great industrials must conduct us towards that supreme perfection in artistic manufacture which ought to be the ambition of every great nation pretending to lead the civilization of the world.

The dignity of labour is beginning to be truly felt, and the designer, as well as the producer, of those minor embellishments of our homes which tend so essentially to refine and civilize a nation, will hold a rank little, if at all, inferior to that of the great artists who are destined to fill those national galleries of art which, most certainly, we are shortly destined to possess.

That we have every cause to hope for eventual success in the higher branches of industrial art is clear, from the dissatisfaction displayed by our neighbours at the distribution of awards, notwithstanding that French exhibitors, in proportion to their numbers, have received more medals than our own. This excessive and unjust discontent has evidently a deeper seat than the mere possession of the awards, which have been far too lavishly distributed to be of any value as marks of merit. It arises from the display of unexpected power and progress among our own producers, in branches which have hitherto been monopolised by France. But I trust in the good sense and chivalrous and manly character of our neighbours not to carry such a feeling beyond a mere temporary ebullition of vexation, for the markets of the world are open to both alike, and the fast-spreading principles of free-trade will enable each nation to prevail in those branches for which it is locally and constitutionally best fitted. The barriers of superstition and international enmity are being broken down, and a wide cosmopolitan feeling is fast superseding the narrow national prejudices of our fathers.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

CARVING IN IVORY AND WOOD.

THE beautifully soft tone and compact texture of ivory, caused it to be highly prized at a very early period, as a material for works of art.

At its first introduction into Greece, it was considered so beautiful and so precious, that its use was confined to statues of the gods alone; and the same is stated of its first knowledge by the Etruscans, Romans, and other Italian states, who first received it through the Carthaginians.

Its use was known to the Egyptians at a very remote period, and the island of Elephanta in the Nile took its name from being the principal commercial depôt of this material. Among Egyptian remains, however, we have only small articles in ivory, and there is no record of its having been applied to statuary.

In Asia, its use was no doubt known as early, if not earlier than in Egypt, though we have no Asiatic monuments of any description pretending to the same antiquity as those of the great African kingdom, unless the records of China are to be trusted in regard to the dates of ancient monuments of that portion of Asia, where, in mediæval and in modern times as well as in India, the art of working in ivory has been carried, as far as minute manipulation goes, to a curious pitch of excellence.

In Central and Western Asia the earliest records of the use of ivory occur in the poems of Homer, and in the sacred writings of the Jews.

That ivory was not known to the Greeks prior to the Trojan war, appears from passages in the poems of Homer, while its use in Asia is mentioned as though it were common; and it is never referred to in describing the richness or detail of Grecian works. Thus the bit of a horse belonging to a Trojan warrior is described as encrusted with ivory; but it is not till after his return from Asia and Egypt, that the palace of Menelaus is described as enriched with ornaments of that material; and then it is referred to as though it was the first time such things had been seen in Greece.

At a somewhat later period, there is a passage in the Psalms attributed to the Jewish king David, in which ivory is alluded to as not then uncommon in Judæa, in the residences of the wealthy—"All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; out of the ivory palaces out of which they have made thee glad." These ivory palaces were doubtless such as contained apartments encrusted with thin plates of

ivory, such as were at a subsequent period described by Pliny as common in Rome, and which explains the term *Eburnea domus*, and also *Eburneum templum*, which did not literally mean houses or temples entirely built of ivory; but buildings in which the principal apartments were lined with thin plates of it.

The next important mention of ivory in the Jewish writings is the description of the throne of Solomon, which we are told was composed of gold and ivory:—

“Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind; and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.”

The precise disposition of the ornaments, or their extent, may not have resembled the thrones of other princes of the period; but the winged lions recently brought from Assyria, are of nearly cotemporary workmanship, and with other Assyrian ornaments they no doubt afford us an excellent idea of the style of the throne of Solomon, which will be realised to the imagination still more strikingly on the arrival of the throne itself of the Assyrian king, one of the last treasures yielded by the excavations at Nimroud.

Ezekiel mentions the profuse use of ivory by the Tyrians, by whom, indeed, and the Phœnicians generally, it was carried to Greece, Italy, and great part of Western Europe, as an article of trade. The passage of Ezekiel runs—

“Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; the company of Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory, brought out from the isles of Chittim.”

That the Assyrians were well acquainted with the use of ivory, the throne just referred to and the fragments of other exquisite ornaments lately brought to light by the enterprising Dr. Layard, are sufficient proof. These remains resemble in style the art of the Egyptians, from which, however, they are sufficiently distinct, as the works of a perfectly separate school.

The works in ivory executed by Greek artists, are the first mentioned by classical authors, as true “works of art.”

The early wooden statues of the Greeks, described in the chapter on Sculpture, were, when they first began to assume a decorative and somewhat artistic aspect, not only painted to imitate life, like the mediæval statues of saints, but were clothed in real draperies, as the statues of the Virgin are still in Catholic countries; and some effeminate Polycrates may have embroidered a rich tunic for some wooden Venus, just as a Ferdinand VII. has been recently found to work a petticoat for the Virgin Mary. The next step was to make the exposed portions of the figure, such as the head, hands, &c., of marble, the semi-transparent quality of which rendered more finely the character and texture of flesh than wood, even when painted flesh colour. To the use of marble for this purpose succeeded ivory, the fine cream-like tone of colour of which was thought still more closely to resemble that of the most delicate human skin. About the same time, sculptured drapery was substituted for the real, and generally gilt with thin plates of gold.

This gold-and-ivory, or Chryselephantine statuary, as it has been termed, had attained to considerable perfection previous to the time of Phidias, but it was from

the hand of the great Athenian sculptor that it received the signet of high art, and was made to hold the highest place in sculpture among the most eminent critics of classical antiquity.

Winkelman appears somewhat incredulous as to the really exquisite effect which ancient authors ascribe to these works, observing that such combinations appear inconsistent with what we know of the refinement of Greek taste; but the fact is that our existing canons of taste are chiefly founded upon the works of antiquity, and in sculpture no works of that art, except those in marble or bronze, have come down to us, so that we have formed our ideas of propriety of material upon them alone; but if, on the contrary, statues combined of ivory and gold had been preserved, instead of those of marble or bronze, it is very possible we should have considered an after innovation of simple marble statues very chilly, and have dubbed works of that pure but colourless material, lifeless and uninteresting.

Certain it is that the ancients fully appreciated the excellence of the Chryselephantine works of the great masters, and have preserved interesting particulars respecting them, especially of the colossal works of Phidias in those materials: the celebrated Jupiter was placed within a temple in the sacred wood called *Allis*, near Olympia, and the statue, though in a sitting posture, nearly touched the roof of the temple, which Pausanias incidentally informs us was fifty-eight feet high. The body of this celebrated statue was naked to the waist, and exquisitely plated with ivory, the lower limbs being clothed in a gilt drapery, while the hair and beard were also gilt. The throne upon which the figure of the deity was seated was formed of ivory, gold, and cedar wood, enriched with precious stones, which latter, or coloured marble, were used also for the eyes; in the extended right hand stood a statuette of Victory of considerable size, also of ivory and gold, which is described as being of extraordinary beauty. The sandals appear also to have been richly wrought in gold, and the bas-relief of the throne, or, according to some, the detached figures of deities with which the throne was surrounded, were also elaborately wrought in all their details, and composed of the same materials as the principal statue. The entire composition would appear to have been one of the highest artistic efforts of classical antiquity; for Strabo tells us that it not only greatly surpassed, both in richness and an imposing majesty of aspect, the later and more finished works of Policlytes, but seemed to realize the actual *præsens numen*. It was in fact the highest effort ever made to impress the worshippers of an idolatrous faith with a sense of the actual and holy presence of a supreme deity. That such *was* the impression upon the ancient worshippers, and that statues of this kind deeply impressed great poets as well as the populace, we may learn from the "Canticles of Canticles," the song of Solomon; passages of which describe the body of a beautiful human being as "of ivory," "thy neck is as a tower of ivory," &c., other portions of the body being equally described as "of ivory, inlaid with sapphires;" all of which epithets were no doubt suggested by statuary of this description, at present under discussion, in which the eyes were frequently formed of sapphires and other precious stones.

The perishable nature of ivory, however, eventually caused its disuse for these purposes; Phidias himself recommending marble, as more durable, for his great

statue of Minerva, in the Parthenon at Athens; but the Athenians preferred the more attractive warmth and life-like reality of ivory; and his second greatest work was, in deference to the popular will of Athens, also of the Chryselephantine class.

In the present active ferment of the principles, practices, prejudices, and superstitions of our imperfectly created but obstinately defended canons of taste—our articles of faith in art—we should carefully examine all the out-works of the fortress, and energetically demolish all such as may tend rather to embarrass, than serve to defend the citadel.

We have been in the habit of considering white marble as the only legitimate material for a school of high sculpture, without having had the means of comparing with it, ivory sculpture on a large scale. Statuettes in ivory, even when entirely of that material, have been considered rather as pretty toys than legitimate works of art; and when enriched with jewels and other extraneous ornaments, such a work has been considered to sink at once into the school of *colifichel* prettiness. But the real state of the case may perhaps be, that it is much easier to manage one material than many; much easier to produce a monochrome statue, when form alone is to be studied, than a polychrome composition where the difficulties of colour, and many other considerations, have also to be artistically considered and overcome: just as many artists may be found capable of producing a fine pictorial composition in mere black and white, who are utterly incapable of carrying it on to a perfect picture, rich with all the spoils of conquest in the subdued region of colour. But, rejoin the defenders of existing taste, “of the powers that be”—always a numerous class—supposing, say they, that the difficulties of such piecemeal statuary be conquered, the effect must always be like that of patchwork—troubled, incomplete, and unsatisfactory as a whole, not for a moment comparable to the beautiful repose and completeness of simple marble.

This rejoinder appears very plausible, because it is based on our long preconceived ideas of artistic propriety. But all such as have examined and duly appreciated Pradier’s exquisite statuette of Leda in the Great Exhibition, must have felt the foundations of their creed crumble beneath them. This truly great artist has in this work worthily revived the Chryselephantine art of Phidias and Polyclitus. Pradier’s is a small work, and a first work in the style, but it is beautiful: the entire figure, the head gracefully crowned with lotus leaves, is of pure ivory, the partial drapery is of gold, as are also the jewels that glitter on the neck and arms, which jewels themselves are farther enriched with turquoises and other precious stones, while the swan is of silver with golden beak and feet; the whole effect of the various metals, ivory, and gems, is so exquisitely balanced, both in quantity, in form, and in colour, that the work only requires to be on a colossal scale,* or even of life-size, to place it in the highest rank as a great work of art. It was a labour of love of the gifted Pradier, who executed it with enthusiasm as a gift to the Artists’ Association of Paris; a society formed to succour distressed members of their profession.

Pradier has already shown a tendency towards the introduction of gold even in his marble statuary, as may be seen in his exquisite ΦΡΥΓΗ, also exhibited in Hyde Park; in which work, the exquisitely designed necklace and bracelets are richly gilt.

* It is about two feet six inches in height.

The ancient works of ivory which, with the exception of small articles of Egyptian and Assyrian workmanship, have reached us, are of comparatively late date, and chiefly Roman, of the Eastern Empire. The most remarkable are the consular tablets, consisting of two plates of ivory, richly carved on the outside, generally known by their Greek name *Dyptica*, which expresses the form of these tablets, as consisting of two plates, folded together by means of a kind of hinge formed of metal wires. The inside of these ivory tablets was covered with wax to write upon, which was done by means of a *stile* or point; and to prevent its being effaced when closed, each side was protected by a raised margin.

In the later periods of the empire, it was customary to present the consuls with such richly carved tablets or *dyptics*, on which are frequently represented the games and combats of the circus, to the superintendence of which, and a few other courtly offices, the once supreme dignity of consul had dwindled. After the establishment of Christianity, such tablets were also occasionally presented to dignitaries of the church, on receiving their appointments; and rich *dyptics* were likewise presented as marks of favour by the eastern emperors to independent princes, as that sent from Constantinople to the Frankish king Clovis, the first independent king of France formally acknowledged by the Greco-Roman emperors.

These *dyptics*, of which many curious and interesting examples exist, are the last, indeed almost the only specimens of ivory of classical antiquity that have reached us. The art continued to be cultivated in Constantinople at a period when the last ten centuries of art commence their progress, and when the annals of the Greco-Roman empire in the East belong to modern history. *Dyptics* and *tryptics* upon a large scale, very exquisitely finished, were executed between the 8th and 10th centuries, especially of the latter period, when the style of art, though in that peculiar form of debasement known as Byzantine style, is yet so beautiful, as regards finish and a remarkable mastery of the manipulation of the material, as to render works of the period exquisite monuments of mediæval skill.

To Western Europe the use of ivory as a material for rich book-covers, reliquaries, and other church ornaments, travelled about this period; and many elaborately designed monuments remain, still as perfect as the day they were wrought, to test the rising skill of our early native artists. The angles of the rich gospel covers, from the 9th to the 12th century, were generally filled with the figures or symbols of the Evangelists, and the centre by a figure of Christ seated on a throne, one hand holding the globe, and the other raised as in the act of teaching. This figure is frequently in such high relief as to be nearly detached; and sometimes of very excellent workmanship. One of the most exquisite specimens of mediæval book-covers of ivory, is that made for one of the crusading kings of Jerusalem; a work of the 12th century, now in the British Museum. The design is of a different character to those described above, being entirely covered with the rich scroll work peculiar to the period, in which spaces are left for small bas-reliefs relating to the life of Christ; the ornaments are very deeply cut, and enriched with turquoises. But it would be impossible to enumerate a hundredth part of even the more celebrated specimens of ivory carving executed during the middle ages, from the curiously wrought set of

chessmen* presented to Charlemagne by the Mahometan conqueror Haroun al Raschid, in the 8th century, to the exquisite drinking-horns and tankards of *Il flammings* in the 16th. Specimens of long drinking-horns, formed of a portion of an elephant's tusk, carved all round with elaborate designs, were wrought as early as the 12th century, as well as other ornaments, such as handles to hunting knives, swords, rich crosiers, and other ecclesiastical ornaments. The jewel caskets of the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries, embracing works both in the most angular Gothic and the most florid *renaissance* styles, and those of all intermediate gradations, form a most interesting series of works in each successive manner; proving that the art of carving in ivory once established in modern Europe was not allowed to decay. Most exquisite works of Albert Durer and other masters exhibit its highest development in the commencement of the 16th century.

The style of more modern works in ivory is well known. The establishment of ivory carving as a special branch of manufacture has long been celebrated in the French town of Dieppe, and also in an inferior class of productions at Geislingen in Wurtemberg, where brooches and other small ornaments of very superior workmanship have been produced, at a price that places them within the reach of all classes of purchasers.

A few recent works must be enumerated, among which stands conspicuous a remarkable modern work in ivory by a Swedish artist, lately exhibited by the Queen, at the recent display of mediæval and modern art, in the rooms of the Society of Arts. The great Exhibition also furnishes some good specimens from the Zolverein and other quarters; among which, the stag-horn and ivory carvings of Rampendal, of Hamburg, and similar specimens from Wiesbaden, in Nassau, are fair specimens. The ivory cup by Michael Hagen, of Munich, is nearly as good as a work of *Il flammings*; and, in another style, the ivory work of Christian Frank, of Furth, is nearly as good. The ivory casket by Christian George, of Copenhagen, with bas-reliefs, after Thorwalsden, must not be overlooked; nor some French works in ivory, both from Paris and Dieppe; as also the pearl carving, enriched with gold, which make the fans of Paris real works of art.

India and China, in the same great international display, furnished some truly exquisite specimens of intricate and delicate workmanship, as the ivory throne, the Chinese carving in jade stone, &c., &c.; but the only specimen of really high art in ivory, is the exquisite statuette of Pradier. The general admiration, however, of that work is a significant proof that the production of works of a very artistic character in ivory, may be aimed at by our great industrials, as well as our first artists, and that a lucrative and noble branch of industrial art may be thus created.

Wood carving followed a very similar course to that of ivory. We find the ancients using rare woods for decorative purposes, as in the cedar-wood carvings of the chest of Cypselus; and in the modern history of art, it begins to figure at an early period.

Towards the 13th century, however, its greatest development took place, upon

* Preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

a magnificent scale; the elaborate stall, tabernacle, and screen-work of carved oak being among the greatest wonders of those truly wonderful monuments—the mediæval cathedrals.

Smaller works of ecclesiastical character were also executed, among the most beautiful of which are the small portable altars, one of which, a beautiful work of the beginning of the 16th century, forms the illustration of this chapter.

The art of carving in wood declined during the 16th century, but was singularly renovated in a new feeling towards the close of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th, by a new race of artists, among whom the most original, and perhaps the greatest, was our own Gibbons, whose carvings in St. Paul's Cathedral, St. James's Church, at Penshurst, and other places, are too well known to require description.

The specimens of monastic and other domestic furniture in carved wood, afford a series of monuments in which the whole progress of the art may be traced from the 13th to the 16th centuries, and about the latter period rich cabinets and tables seem to have occupied the carving tools of really great artists, so excellent is the design and execution of some of these works.

A variety of interesting publications have called public attention to the rich productions of mediæval skill during the last twelve or fifteen years, causing the previous frigid attempts at reproducing a classical style in furniture to be completely abandoned for the mediæval styles. But in most cases those styles have been but imperfectly comprehended by the public at large, and a vast Wardour-street commerce has been erected on the sure foundation of that ignorance, which is likely to last at least as long as the wretchedly cotted up specimens which minister to it.

These wretched patchwork combinations, consisting of every incongruous mixture, stuck together so as to form some article of furniture in common use, have hitherto found a ready sale, though without any pervading design, and the detached pieces themselves being generally fragments of the coarsest and most worthless specimens.

The great step made within the last four or five years in this department, must, however, soon put an end to this paltry traffic in patchwork. And many specimens in the great Exhibition show that modern producers of a better stamp are hurrying on towards rapid improvement in the right direction, which has been greatly accelerated by encouragement afforded by the revived taste for church decoration.

In the great house of glass, but few specimens of wood carving belong to the highest branch of the art, which may be described as statuary in wood; the group by Geerts, of Louvain, in oak, and the crucifix by Vanhoof, of Antwerp, being almost the only specimens, but both very good.

In the decorative branches of the art, displayed in the enrichment of furniture and other articles, many beautiful examples occur; and we have seen the graceful carvings of the industrious Swiss executed during the long winters, amid the snow of their Alps, in which works the greatest advantage has been taken of the character of some of their native pine timber; the ornament being carved in the white stratum, while the red portion of the timber is made to form the ground.

Some neat Norwegian and Swedish carving looks like French or British work of the 16th century, and is yet so accurate and complete, as far as it goes, as to form

an interesting specimen of the recent progress of Northern art. The French wood carving, as exhibited in the exquisite ebony cabinet by Ringuet le Prince, and in the small but most beautiful specimens of Lienard, equals the finest furniture work of the 16th century; and the magnificent sideboard by Amelot, supported by sitting hounds, the upper part decorated with game and fruit, would be a noble work if all the upper part representing the four quarters of the world, and other still less appropriate subjects, were all cut away. From Belgium the ebony cabinet of Roulé, of Antwerp, is a fine specimen of industrial art.

The Austrian carving in a certain bold but highly finished style, is perhaps unrivalled, especially the celebrated bed, a sideboard, and a suit of chairs; while even from India and China, carved gates, lattices, and other works, exhibit very remarkable expertness; from India indeed, several cabinets in a semi-European style, are very beautiful specimens of neat workmanship.

The English carvers have not the least distinguished themselves in the contest. In the style of work exhibited by Messrs. Gillows, and the handsome sideboard by Messrs. Hunter and others, we are perhaps surpassed by the more artistic and expert treatment of the Parisian and Vienese carvers; but in the sideboard in two woods, by Mr. Lieven, and the candelabra in dark and light woods by Messrs. Willis and Bartlett, as in the rich cabinet with porcelain pilasters by Dowbiggen, we stand more alone. But it is in the recently-founded English style, based on that of our celebrated Gibbons, that we are most successful; here the nearly detached foliage and flowers, and the delicate carving of feathered game, in high relief, is peculiarly successful, and unlike any foreign productions exhibited in the great international contest; in this department the Messrs. Rogers lead the way, but are closely followed, if not in some points surpassed, by the Messrs. Hanson, and by the exquisite lime-tree carvings of Wallis; while our untaught artists, such as George Cook, the author of the Warwick sideboard, in another line, promise future excellence.

In inlaid woods, the most astonishing specimen is, perhaps, an elaborate specimen of Spanish industry, the table by Perery, of Barcelona, most intricately ornamented with mosaic, the minute tesserae being all formed of coloured woods. So minute is the detail of some of the ornaments, that a strong lens has been supplied, to magnify them for the curious observer. Scarcely less elaborate in another style, is an Italian work, the table inlaid in minute geometric patterns by Rolandi, of Brescia; and in still another style of broad pictorial inlaying the tables by Medina, of Madrid, are remarkable; while an English specimen of inlaying in stained woods in floral patterns, in a style recently very successfully revived and treated, is shown in the cabinet by Smea and Sons.

In fine, the last ten centuries of art in wood and ivory carving, if they have never produced such works as the "Olympian Jupiter" of Phidias, and if the excellence attained in many branches of the art in the 15th and 16th centuries had faded in the 17th and died in the 18th, yet show at the present epoch a vast advance over their beginnings; and the revival of a true artistic feeling within the last few years, promises progress and success beyond what the most sanguine would have dared to hope only a dozen years ago.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

ARTISTIC WORKS

IN

GLASS, POTTERY, AND PORCELAIN.

THAT glass was known to the ancients at a very early period is proved by the small toys and ornaments of Egyptian workmanship, of which numerous specimens are to be found in all public museums and national collections of importance, and that the vitreous substance of which these objects are composed was actually glass, produced in a similar manner to that of modern manufacture, the Egyptian paintings of Beni-Hassan exhibiting the whole process of glass-blowing, which appears to have been executed in the reign of Osirtasen the first, cotemporary of Joseph, leave little reason to doubt. The tombs of Egypt furnish, in addition to the glass toys above alluded to, bottles, drinking-cups, and a multitude of other objects.

At a later period Sidon and Alexandria were the great marts of glass manufacture, from whence, articles both for domestic use and luxury were exported to Greece and Rome. The *sand* most used in these seats of glass manufacture appears to have been imported from the coast of Syria, near the mouth of the river Belus, which doubtless gave rise to the story narrated by Pliny, of the accidental discovery of the art of glass making by a party of Syrian travellers at this spot, who, finding no stones to support their cooking vessels, brought from their ships, which were laden with nitre, some lumps of that material suitable for their purpose, which becoming fused by the heat of the fire, united with the sand of the coast, upon which they rested, and formed a stream of vitreous matter.

The same author leads us to suppose that the Sidonians attempted the fabrication of glass mirrors, with the view of superseding those of polished steel; an attempt in which they appear to have failed. But though it is seen that glass was *known* prior to the era of Roman supremacy, it did not hold a high place as a vehicle for artistic decoration, partly, no doubt, from its extreme hardness, and the consequent difficulty of engraving upon it, while the art of moulding designs, and afterwards attaching them by partial re-fusion, does not appear to have been understood till a comparatively late period.

During the reigns of the first Roman emperors, great strides seem to have been made in glass manufacture; for Strabo mentions that a common glass drinking-cup

could be purchased for half an *as*, at that time less than a halfpenny of our money; while in the immediately preceding period, the application of glass as an architectural material was first essayed, so that the Crystal Palaces of our day are not novelties. This Roman application of glass to building purposes was exhibited in the erection of the celebrated theatre for the public games, which Æmilius Scaurus caused to be constructed after his return from Syria. The elevation of the *scena* of this edifice consisted of three stories, the lower one being of marble, and the upper one of gilt wood-work, while the middle one was of *glass*. The manner in which glass was used in this instance was doubtless as a *facing*, just as thin plates of very precious marble might have been used for the same purpose.

The material afterwards came into general use for similar purposes, the walls and even floors of ordinary apartments being furnished with a surface of glass. Rooms fitted up in this way were called *vitrea camera*, and the panels, *vitrea quadratura*. The art of ornamenting small articles of glass with artistic decorations of a high character soon followed; and we find that as early as the time of Nero, a number of Sestertii equal to £50 of our money, were frequently given for a single drinking-glass of this description.

In the time of Pliny, the use of glass had so much extended, that manufactories were established, not only in Italy, but in Gaul and Spain.

Modes of imitating in glass nearly all the precious stones were also discovered, as well as the mode of engraving upon them by means of the *adamus* or diamond, and even of multiplying such engravings in fac-simile with glass pastes, by which means the designs of the finest gems were placed within the reach of those who were unable to purchase the real stones.

A method was also discovered of attaching moulded reliefs of semi-opaque white glass, to grounds of some rich dark colour; and that, so beautifully, that the well-known Portland vase, which is an exquisite example of this description of Roman glass-ware, was thought by Montfaucon and other critics of the last century, to be a real sardonyx. At what period the Romans adopted glass instead of the *lapis specularis*, for the purpose of window lights, is unknown; but that it was in use for that purpose at the time of the destruction of Pompeii is certain, as bronze lattices with some of the still remaining pieces of glass in them were among the archæological curiosities revealed by the excavations carried on there by the Neapolitan government.

One especial process in common use among Roman glass-makers deserves to be mentioned separately, as affording a useful hint to modern manufacturers; a certain number of rods of glass, of different colours and sizes, were so placed together, as that a clean cross-cut through the whole should exhibit, on the face of the section, a set pattern. When the bundle of rods were accurately placed according to design, and fixed, they were subjected to precisely that degree of heat which would soften them, without absolutely melting, and so cement them together. The mass, when cold, was rapidly cut by some means, into thin slices, each of which formed a perfect slab or tile, exhibiting on its surface the same pattern. Examples of this method are still in existence, the patterns of which are very elegant; and it is evident that it may be applied to modern purposes with great effect.

The art of glass-making was not lost with the decline of the Roman Empire; and though artistic manipulation of a high character disappeared, very curious cups and other vessels, of intricate though not artistic workmanship, were made at Constantinople, after the complete fall of the Empire in the West.

The most remarkable works in glass of the middle ages are, doubtless, the painted windows; an art which, however, was not discovered till the time of Charles the Bald, in the 9th century. *Stained* glass, and *painted* glass, have been confused in some of the accounts of the progress of this branch of art, but they are perfectly distinct. A process of staining glass was known to the ancients, but not the art of decorating it with transparent paintings; and even the staining of flat pieces of glass for windows appears to have been a late invention of the Romans; for the small remains of glass for windows discovered at Pompeii are invariably white; and it is not till the time of Constantine, that we hear of coloured windows. The first recorded, are those of the famous Basilica of St. Paul, built by the last-named Emperor, but greatly enlarged and embellished by Theodosius, by whom the coloured windows were most likely added, as a passage in Prudentius, quoted in another place, would seem to infer.

All the coloured windows mentioned by Fortunatus, Gregory of Tours, and Anastasius, at a later period, were still merely *stained*, and not painted, as is plain by the style in which they are described. They are spoken of as imitating "the various colours of the rainbow," and in other cases, as shedding a glowing tone of amber, like the rays of the setting sun; but no painting or design of any kind is alluded to.

In the reign of Charles the Bald,* as I have said, or of Louis le Debonnaire, the art of glass painting was first practised in France; a fact recorded incidentally by the historian of the monastery of St. Benignus, of Dijon, who, writing in 1052, states, that an ancient glass window existed in his time, representing the martyrdom of St. Paschasia, which window was taken from the ancient church which had been enlarged and embellished by Charles the Bald. That this was most probably one of the very first specimens of painted glass ever executed, is corroborated by the circumstance that the popes Adrian I. and Leo III., who lived in the immediately preceding period, caused no *painted* windows to be executed for any of the splendid buildings which they erected, not even for the church of San Giovanni Laterano, the windows of which are described by Anastasius as of "glass of different colours" only, while it is pretty certain that these magnificent hierarchs would have availed themselves of the art of glass painting had it been known in their time.

The subsequent history of glass painting, as an adjunct of ecclesiastical architecture, has been too fully discussed in recent works to require additional discussion here; and I shall therefore only remark that the illustration to this article is from the church of Brou, one of the most exquisite gems of the *renaissance* style. The windows of this interesting monument, both in their form and pictorial decoration, display the peculiarities of that elegant phase of art in a more beautiful manner than

* See David—*Histoire de la Peinture*.

any other work I am acquainted with. A few years, nay a few months ago, its beauties would not have been appreciated: our artists in glass painting having fixed their affections exclusively on the geometrical patterns of the 12th century, and on the stiff and peculiar pictorial compositions of the 14th, among the wry necks, sharp noses, knock-knees, and angular elbows, of which they seemed to revel with peculiar delight. But a better feeling is fast peeping out, and the fine Milanese window by Bertini, in the great Exhibition, is, with many defects, so superior to any of our own works in the cramped style referred to, that it must tend to revolutionize the Gothic taste so completely as scarcely to leave any admiration for my specimen from Brou; although in that example the quaintness of style and drawing is so slight as scarcely to deserve the term, and so graceful, as really to form one of the charms of the work. In other branches of glass manufacture, modern art did not develop itself remarkably till towards the 15th century, when the drinking glasses and the mirrors of Venice became celebrated all over Europe. In the beginning of the 16th century the glass ware of Germany became also celebrated, and the graceful, or quaint, or richly embellished forms of the German glass of this period are greedily sought by collectors. After that epoch, however, the artistic treatment of the material declined again, while, at the same time, all the mechanical appliances for the mere manufacture of the raw material were greatly improving. Eventually, at an epoch very near our own time, the purity and transparency of the finest natural crystal has been surpassed by the brilliancy of pure flint glass, in the beauty of which we have surpassed all rivals, though their advances in the same manufacture have been also great. The decorations, however, of this beautiful material were generally confined to mere facet cutting, and it was not till the Germans began again to assert their ancient claim to excellence by the new style of glass work produced in Bohemia, that we ourselves, incited by the example, began to invest this exquisite material with worthy artistic embellishment.

The great Exhibition has shown to all, the progress achieved. Not only did we behold there a speckless, faultless mirror, above eighteen feet high by ten broad; showing that, in the progress of the mere fabrication of plate-glass, we have surpassed our neighbours, the French and Germans, in which till recently they surpassed us: not only was there the Crystal Fountain, the brilliancy of which exceeded that of the glittering element which it scatter'd so gracefully in that palace of art; but there was also a display of really artistic design in glass, which, both in form, in colour, and in elaborately engraved decorations, equalled, in many respects, the curious works of the 15th and 16th centuries, and which in the brilliancy of the material itself very far surpassed them.

ornamental and very original arabesque designs, and in a series of reproductions of Etruscan patterns, Mr. Green exhibited some truly exquisite works ; while a wine-glass valued at fifteen guineas seemed to point in the direction of the fifty-guinea chalices of the age of Nero.

Messrs. Apsley Pellat, Bacchus, and others, were equally successful. In this beautiful branch of art manufacture, some of the specimens of engraved glass mounted in enamelled gold and silver, by Morell and Co., were gems that might have passed criticism in the age of Cellini. But the promising part of all this is, that it is evidently but a beginning. A young and well-trained race of designers are just issuing from our new schools of design, who will soon, if our manufacturers know how to cultivate their talents, move far in advance of the present state of decorative art in this country.

POTTERY AND PORCELAIN.

The potter's wheel was one of the first pieces of mechanism devised by human ingenuity. It is found depicted on the walls of Egyptian palaces erected before the age of Abraham, and is described in the verse of Homer. The art was not confined to the Egyptians or the Greeks, but seems to have been practised at an early period by all nations ; even the distant Britons understood it, and remains have been discovered, with the potters' names upon the work, which belong to an epoch prior to the Roman invasion.

Even during the monarchic period of Rome pottery was so important a branch of industry, that Numa is said to have instituted a corporation of potters. At Athens this class of artizans was so numerous that a part of the city was called *Cerameicus*, as being exclusively inhabited by them.

The style of Grecian and Etruscan pottery is well known. But I may remind the student that valueless clay was, by the hand of Athenian art, rendered more precious than gold. The masterpieces of this craft were publicly exhibited at the Panathenæa, and were given, filled with oil, as prizes to the victors in the great public games, at which important occasions they were deemed worthy rewards. Part of the Athenian excellence in this branch of art depended upon the peculiar qualities of the clay of the Colian promontory, and such was the mania of the dilettanti of that period for the possession of vases and cups in that material, fashioned by Athenian art, that Plutarch, in ridiculing the excess to which the taste was carried, says, that if a man of taste had been accidentally poisoned, he would refuse to take the antidote unless it were presented to him in a cup of Colian clay.

Earthen vessels were not esteemed by the Persians, and even among the Romans they gave way to those formed of the precious metals or glass ; the Romans, however, always preserved a taste for the finer specimens, and statuary in clay always continued to be venerated as an ancient and almost sacred form of sculpture. A consecrated quadriga of terra-cotta surmounted the pediment of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, while earthen vessels were always used in their religious ceremonials long after silver vessels were common for private uses.

Glazed pottery appears to have been known to the Egyptians at an early period, though only fabricated in small articles ; beside which, no ancient remains exist, unless we except the apparently fabulous antiquity claimed by the Chinese for some of their works of this class. As an European art we do not hear of it until it was practised as an Italian manufacture in the 15th century, under the name of Majolica, a term supposed to be derived from the circumstance of the art having been derived from Majorca, where it was practised by Moors driven out of Spain ; an Eastern origin, however remote or indirect, being always claimed for this art. The first Italian specimens were produced by the brothers Della Robbia.

The beautiful specimens of this ware produced in Italy towards the end of the 15th and during the 16th centuries, were the result of the skill of the first artists of the age, who deemed it no desecration of their talents to paint rich and beautiful designs on the exquisite surface which the makers of majolica presented to them.

It is foreign to my purpose to attempt to follow and describe the "Curiosities of Earthenware Manufacture"—how Bernard Palissy, of Limoge, a place long celebrated for its enamelling on metal, succeeded, after various disappointments, in establishing the art in France, just as it began to languish in Italy—how, in disregard of his services, he perished in prison, a victim to religious persecution—how the peculiar style of work called Henri-deux-ware suddenly arose and disappeared.

The first records of English pottery belong to the reign of Elizabeth—when the introduction of painted earthenware caused metal to fall into disuse, and the metal workers were the first modern British potters. They endeavoured to rival the foreign designs by pouring a liquid clay into their metal moulds, producing thus a light ware far from unattractive.

The raised enamel work on pottery of the Brothers Della Robbia, in Italy, Palissy, in France, is much sought by collectors, and is very creditable to the industrial arts of the beginning of the 16th century, the high finish of the raised figures of fish, reptiles, &c., on the Palissy ware being sometimes very extraordinary.

The plate illustrating this subject contains a raised work *sauce-boat* of the latter class, a salt-cellar of nearly the same period, more resembling the Henri-II.-ware, and a covered tazza of the Italian Majolica, said to be decorated with designs in *Camé-gris* by the hand of Giulio Romano.

Porcelain is distinguished from earthenware, as is well known, by its semi-transparency. Its manufacture in Europe is of very recent origin, though long known to the Chinese and Japanese. The accidental discovery of a mode of making semi-transparent earthenware, or porcelain, was accidentally discovered in the laboratory of Augustus II., the alchymist elector of Saxony, about the year 1705—and the elector soon perceived that a more profitable speculation was open to him than the discovery of the philosopher's stone. Hence the establishment of the celebrated Dresden China works—at first highly profitable, but eventually like all princely speculations degenerating into jobbery, and consequent loss. The porcelain of Dresden was the first to claim any degree of excellence, and its works in small statuettes, as well as in its more ordinary forms, upheld their reputation till near the middle of the 18th century, old Dresden ware being as much prized by connoisseurs as even Italian Majolica.

Next followed the establishment of the porcelain manufactory of Sevres in France, in which the first artists of the country were engaged in the decoration of its finest works ; and the productions of this establishment, from its foundation to the reign of Louis Philippe, are marked with a particular cypher for each reign, and form as beautiful a series of objects illustrating the progress of art within those periods as can be conceived.

In England the Chelsea ware was the first to claim any attention for artistic merit ; and after that the Derby and Worcester ware. But the eventual cheapness of the products of the Staffordshire potteries, and the good wearing qualities of such designs as the too celebrated "swallow pattern," put down all rivalry.

It was the genius of Wedgewood that first brought the Staffordshire potteries into artistic notice. Perceiving the beauties of ancient art, more particularly that of the Greek and Etruscan vases, he sought their imitation, and in his enthusiasm named the establishment he succeeded in forming, Etruria. Here he succeeded in copying the celebrated Portland vase, and that so exquisitely that good specimens commanded extravagant prices. Wedgewood engaged the talents of Flaxman and other great artists, and became the real founder of the important character which the English manufacturers in this branch have assumed, notwithstanding the still prevailing popularity of the "swallow pattern."

Since the time of Flaxman real progress slumbered till within the last ten years, a period at which most of our industrial arts began to revive, in consequence of improved public taste ; and in no branch is the improvement more striking than in that of pottery and porcelain. The great Exhibition displayed our progress in this department to high advantage, and met with little rivalry, except that of the French national establishment at Sevres, the best specimens from which are produced without regard to cost, at all approach our own best examples. Even in the modern imitation of the Palissy ware, our works are infinitely superior to those of his own countrymen. The statuettes in *Parian*, however, which our fabrics have boasted so much of, were decidedly inferior to similar French works in *biscuit*, especially in the modelling and reproduction of the extremities. But in rich dinner and tea services—in vases rivalling the glories of the Italian Majolica—or the porcelain of Dresden, or Sevres, as well as in ornamental garden vases and encaustic tiles—we were unrivalled, and the name of Minton generally stood supreme in the entire department, though a small vase exhibited by Copeland, termed jewel ware, was as remarkable for elaborate and curious design as it is faultless in mechanical execution.

In fine, our manufactories of earthenware and porcelain are in an active state of vigorous progression, and none can guess what wonders of beauty and art may not be shown to the world, if in another ten years, another universal exhibition should take place.*

* The application of pottery, porcelain, and glass to building purposes I have treated in Chapter I., (Architecture), but I would particularly call attention to the semi-opaque mottled glass of various rich colours, of the manufactory at 93 Thames-street, as peculiarly suited to such purposes.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

TEXTILE FABRICS.

THE origin of the art of weaving is lost in the depths of the distant civilization of Central Asia; and that the Chinese, in the still farther East, understood the use of silk for weaving purposes, is proved by their use of a skein of silk as a symbol in their earliest hieroglyphic writings, which date as early as even 3000 years before the Christian era. To discuss the manner of the first invention of the looms of oriental countries would therefore now be idle.

It will be sufficient to remind my readers that the earliest writers speak of woven fabrics as in common use; and even textile fabrics of the richest character are alluded to as things of no uncommon occurrence, but occasionally remarkable for superior excellence of ornamental design.

Moses, in describing the erection of the tabernacle and its various appurtenances, and the robes of the priests, not only mentions curtains of goat's-hair, but purple and fine linen, and curious embroidery; and that they "beat the gold into thin plates and cut it into wires, to work it into the blue, and the purple, and the scarlet, with curious work." A girdle of this kind, formed of blue, and purple, and scarlet needlework, is also mentioned; and the hem of the garment of Aaron was embroidered with a pattern formed of a bell and pomegranate; a "bell and a pomegranate round about it."

The peculiar style of these ornaments and embroidery may now be vividly conceived, from the examination of the numerous representations of embroidered robes in the recently unburied sculptures of Assyria, which were, perhaps, being carved at the very time of the building of the tabernacle; though they more probably belong to a somewhat more recent period, but one in which the general style of Asiatic art had suffered but little change, and they are therefore capable of illustrating in a vivid manner the mosaic style of art.

We find that the Asiatics excelled at a very early period in the fabrication of carpets, termed by the Greeks *ταπης*, or *ταπισ*, from which the French *tapis* and our term tapestry is derived; and that rich carpets or pieces of tapestry were dis-

played by the Egyptians and Carthaginians at festivals and other public occasions ; and they were also used by the Greeks as early as the age of Homer ; and at a later period, by the Roman emperors as prizes at the Circensian games.

In the East, the most renowned seat of this branch of manufacture was Babylon. But Alexandria, Carthage, and Corinth, were also celebrated for their carpets and tapestry in general.

Fine specimens of woven textures of this description were spread over couches, thrones, &c., of persons of distinction, especially at nuptial ceremonials. Catullus speaks of one so used, which represented the whole story of Theseus and Ariadne. On state occasions the orientals also spread carpets over their floors ; and the modern carpets of Turkey and Persia show that Asia has not forgotten her ancient textile skill, though she displays no longer her former talent in the higher branches of the art in which dramatic scenes were represented as in pictures.

In articles of dress, the skill of the loom was early called into requisition in the East, especially in that sort of shawl called peplos (*πεπλος*) by the Greeks, which in the East was anciently worn by both men and women, as at the present day. Women of high rank wore the peplos trailing on the ground, and of the richest texture ; indeed, it was upon shawls that the greatest skill and labour of the loom were bestowed ; and so various and exquisitely wrought were the subjects on the most beautiful of these works, that the greatest poets felt inspired to describe, with an embroidery of words, the objects wrought more materially in silken and golden threads.

The East was then, as now, the great seat of the most luxurious shawl manufacture, and Tyre and Sidon were the ports from which they were exported to the West.

Polemon wrote an elaborate essay on the shawls of Carthage (a Tyrian colony), and a work entitled "The Shawl," and intended to illustrate certain parts of the "Iliad," was ascribed to Aristotle, while the learned Varro did not think it beneath him to write a *πεπλογραφία*, or treatise on shawls. Some are described which exhibited the stars, &c. according to the ancient system of astronomy, and some belonging to temples (as votive offerings), represented hunting pieces, and other scenes, among the finest of which were those in the temple of Delphi, only exhibited in processions and other great priestly ceremonials.

The Romans imported these riches of the oriental looms into Italy as their wealth increased. They called the arts of weaving and embroidering subjects on shawls and carpets, textile painting. Still, among the Romans, the simplest forms of weaving were the most highly esteemed, and so long as any remnant of the early republican manners remained, a loom formed the most honourable piece of furniture in the house of every family of distinction ; the labours of which were directed by the female principals of the family, while the more intricate part of the work was actually executed by their own fingers. The same practice was common in Greece ; and Iphigenia is made by Euripides to recognise her brother Orestes by the figured clothing which he wore, and which she had herself woven ; but, at a later period, both in the East and West, the art of weaving appears to have passed into the hands of the other sex.

That embroidery, a more obvious art than decorative weaving, should have been

carried to a still greater extent by the ancients is easily understood, and some of the accounts of the splendid works wrought by this means are almost incredible, especially towards the decline of the Roman empire, when the robes of oriental embroidery worn by Diocletian, appear to have been of extraordinary richness ; but this art, as well as all others, decayed with the fall of Rome, which had enveloped the whole civilized world in its mantle of empire ; and when those protecting folds shrank from the defenceless nations, the arts everywhere declined before barbaric invasion. The Greeks were the last to retain and revive the sparks of every branch of ancient art ; and in the 12th century they were the only European nation in possession of the silk-worm, though it had been introduced in the 6th. At that time they furnished all Europe with rich stuffs, and the daughters of Athens still wove with as dexterous fingers in the darkness of the 12th century as in the days of Arachne, for the woven stuffs of Greece exhibited at that period curiously elaborate designs (though of course of the well-known Byzantine character), which displayed flowers, fruits, and landscapes, as well as historical and allegorical subjects. Some textures were made at this time so weighty with gold threads, and superadded embroidery and precious stones, that, in the form of a robe, they weighed down with fatigue the luxurious wearer, whilst others, we are told, were so delicately fine, that an entire piece might be placed in the hollow of a cane. These works were exported to Gaul, to Spain, to Africa, and even Britain ; and Vandals, Visigoths, Franks, and Saxons were clothed in the rich cloths of the Grecian looms.

As the Eastern empire fell, the energies of Greece decayed, but fortunately Western Europe had already become inoculated with her spirit of manufacture. The Norman conquerors of Sicily imported silk-worms into that island, along with Greek artizans to manage them, and the culture and the art spread from thence to Italy and to France.

A taste for rich draperies became one of the great features of ecclesiastical splendour ; the richness of carved marble, and stone rendered more precious than marble by its workmanship, was concealed on great festivals in the churches, by cloth of gold, in which brilliantly-coloured designs were intricately woven, and the robes of state, of both prelates and princes, were of a similar character of richness ; the hand of the embroiderer commencing its labours when the elaborations of the weaver had ceased. The French town of Arras became one of the great seats of tapestry manufacture, which took its name, and the greatest masters of painting eventually lent their aid, frequently making designs for the richest works ; and it is a series of such designs from the hand of Raphael for the manufactory at Arras, that we now admire in the Cartoons of Hampton Court. That series of Cartoons was originally made for the tapestry with which the piazza of San Pietro, at Rome, was decorated during the festival of the *Corpus Domini*. The actual tapestry itself, woven from those designs, is still in excellent preservation, and still used for its original purpose, only one or two subjects being missing, which were sold during the revolutions of the last years of the 18th century, to a Jew, for the gold threads which they contained.

Other curious pieces of tapestry exist, long preceding in chronological order the series woven at Arras from the designs of Raphael ; among which are several of the 13th and 14th centuries, not to mention the famous Bayeux roll

worked by the fair hands of the wife of William of Normandy, and her attendant ladies, in the 11th century.

France became, at a later period, celebrated also for her carpets, the Aubusson manufacture being highly prized all over Europe. The establishment of the government tapestry manufactory of the Gobelins gave the finishing touch to the supremacy of that country in this department; while her silk fabrics, long growing and progressing silently but surely at Lyons, at length eclipsed the textile fabrics of the whole world by the beauty of their designs.

Lace had been first made in Spain in the 15th century, and its fabrication was early engrafted on the low countries, where the productions of Mechelen, Valenciennes, and Brussels, soon surpassed the works of Spain in that branch of textile art, some of the ecclesiastical lace work (point lace) of the 16th century still remaining unrivalled in richness, in design, and in general quality. France, in the meantime, had not been behind in entering the field in lace work, and the point of Cambray and Alençon, soon rivalled the produce of the pillows of the low countries.

In England the progress in the higher branches of the textile art had been slow. Broad cloths, blankets, and coarse linens she produced, both through the medium of domestic looms and in established factories, but scarcely anything more; though, in embroidery on velvets (the velvets themselves being imported), native artists frequently displayed much skill.

James I., in the beginning of the 17th century, was the first to endeavour by governmental patronage to introduce the culture of the silk-worm, and planted whole groves of mulberry-trees for that purpose, but the project failed; the unwise edict of Nantes, under Louis XIV., being the first occasion of giving a real stimulus to our textile manufactures. The persecuted Protestants of France fled from Lyons, Rouen, and other seats of French industry, and established here those manufactories which have since become so extensive, if not as flourishing as they ought to be. Thus originated, not only the silk-weavers of Spitalfields, but the stocking-weavers of Nottingham, the carpet-weavers of Kidderminster, and other places.

But the great staple of English textile fabric has been created through the means of the brave men she drove forth to America. By this means cotton has been produced in such abundance on the other side of the Atlantic, and its export thence so almost entirely confined to this country, that the fabrication of cloths from it has been effected in such vast abundance as to give us the command of all the markets of the world; and those markets have been secured to us by the low prices which our extraordinary improvements in the mechanical appliances of machinery have enabled us to work for.

Indeed it was the comparatively recent invention of the steam-engine, the spinning-jenny, and the power-loom—all creations of the end of the last century—that first gave us that command of trade which we now possess in all articles produced by their means; and, such is the perfection to which machinery of that kind has been carried, that even exquisite lace, of most elaborate design, is now produced by it, and sold at a few *pence* per yard, while similar patterns on the pillows of Flanders, could not be wrought for as many guineas.

In quality and facility of production we now stand unrivalled; but what is to be

said of our designs? It is our inferiority in this particular that still allows our French and other continental rivals to hold certain markets against us.

The display in the great Exhibition has shown our inferiority in this respect. Even the works of semi-barbarous states beat us in design. The shawls of India, though they do not surpass some of the finest productions of the French looms, are certainly more original than those of our own. Even the gold embroidery of Tunis, Albania, and Turkey, surpass in taste our ordinary works, and it is from one of the latter that I have selected the illustration of this chapter; they are the following.

The central example was labelled in the Exhibition as the work of "Tuysuzoglous' daughter," and a very graceful invention is this piece of needlework of the Turkish maiden, whose rivals, Sofialioglus' daughter, Hadgi-Mihal, and other artists rich in the oriental euphony of their names, have nevertheless equalled. The specimen first named is worked in gold thread and spangles, on violet silk. The next, No. 2, by "Sofialioglus' daughter," is delicately wrought on very transparent muslin; and No. 3 is also a delicate border worked on muslin; all three displaying great originality of design; and, as coming from a seat of manufacture for which our own producers have great contempt, may stimulate them to efforts in a fresher and more original style of design than is generally found in their works of this class.

The last ten centuries of art in textile fabrics have exhibited great barbaric richness in the early periods; wonderful variety and exuberance of design in the 15th and 16th centuries, and great decline in the last half of the 18th and first quarter of the 19th. But a period of revival has set in in good earnest; and the exquisite specimens of Gobelin tapestry, and other continental specimens in every branch of woven fabrics in the Great Exhibition, not forgetting the embroidered muslins of Switzerland, must impart a great stimulus to our own manufacturers. These are already in brisk movement, showing, in some cases, such superior specimens, even of design, in the recent trial of skill, as must, with the wonderful appliances of the most perfect machinery in the world, lead to great results; while the lace work exhibited by Messrs. Groucock, and by Mr. Hayward, of Nottingham, seem to point in the right direction. Among the remarkable textile fabrics of the Exhibition, I would call to the recollection of our manufacturers the magnificent brocades and gold damasks from Moscow; the singular embroidery of peculiar style executed on a fabric produced from the fibre of the pine-apple, exhibited by the Signora Margarita, of Manilla; the elegant lace work of novel design, with semi-detached flowers, by Madame Hubert, of Paris; the Chantilly lace of Aubrey-Freres, and the bed-cover in *point d'Alençon*, by Lefebure, as also the French white lace mantillas made for the Mexican market, and another bed-cover embroidered on cambric, the production of which occupied eight pair of hands for nine months. These are real works of art, the careful and exquisite designs of which, if they have been well studied, will do much towards improving our national taste in the production of textile fabrics of a high class.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

MOSAIC.

IN speaking of mosaic, I shall be very brief, as its construction is necessarily so laborious as to forbid the possibility of its general and popular application as a decorative art. In public buildings, however, its judicious application may prove highly decorative ; and, eventually, through the medium of a kind of reproduction, by which one finished model might be repeated with comparatively small labour, its use may be extended in some cases even to domestic dwellings.

Mosaic, or *opus musivum*, as it was termed by the Romans, was common in Asia Minor at an early period ; but no remains of the art, as practised by the Greeks either in Asia Minor or in Europe, have been discovered.

In the Roman period, Pliny informs us that there were various kinds of mosaic, the two principal of which were, *lithostrotum*, or bordering, often of very rich and varied pattern ; and the proper *opus musivum*, which was the term applied generally to the *pictura de musivum*, or mosaic painting. The lithostrota were made of various coloured cubes, mechanically applied in geometric, but often rich patterns ; while the *opus musivum* was composed, it is said, of minute and thin slabs of marble, of forms suited to the flow of the subject.

The first use of mosaic by the Romans appears to have been in the time of Sulla, who caused the floor of the Temple of Fortune at Prænesti to be made in mosaic ; and the fine floor discovered in the last century in that locality is supposed to be the very pavement alluded to by ancient writers. In small houses mosaics, or rather lithostrota, were in common use, in which the patterns are generally confined to black and white, but often of very excellent design. In superior dwellings, the mosaics were of the true *opus musivum*, and represented scenes of real life, birds, animals, &c. Some of those recently disinterred at Pompeii being truly magnificent specimens of the art, both in execution, elaboration, and design. Among these, that representing the Battle of Issus is the most celebrated ; but, fine as it is, it is evidently a somewhat debased copy of a much finer and earlier work. The Romans extended this art to the walls, and even the ceilings of their dwellings, and introduced it into the semi-barbarous countries of the north and west, as they came successively under the dominion of the empire—very excellent examples being continually discovered, not only in Spain and Gaul, but even in Hungary and Britain.

Towards the close of the empire the art displayed in mosaic decorations greatly

declined, but at the same time the use of this laborious art became more profuse; especially after the establishment of Christianity, when it formed the most splendid means of ornamentation adopted in the decoration of the first churches founded by Constantine and his successors. As real art declined, a kind of barbaric splendour gradually assumed its place; and, as rich stuffs of oriental fabric, profusely enriched with grotesque, but elaborately rich designs, enriched with gold and silver thread, and even pearls and other gems, usurped the place of the artistic productions of the decayed looms of Greece, so in the art of mosaic, the noble composition, correct design, and scientific distribution of subdued but beautiful colours of former periods, were sought to be replaced by a vain and gaudy glitter of purple and gold.

Nevertheless, the vast mosaics of this epoch, with their invariable ground of bright gold, form highly interesting records of art, and are, in fact, links in pictorial history where monuments of no other kind have reached us. These great formal pictures in mosaic, which frequently occupy the semi-dome forming the ceiling of the apse of the early Basilicæ, are generally in the stiff and peculiar style which marked the Byzantine art of the period, for the *workmen*, no longer *artists*, were doubtless brought from Constantinople. Such, for instance, is the fine specimen executed in the reign of Honorius in the church of San Paolo, at the time of its repairs during his reign; and such also are many well-preserved specimens of about the same epoch at Ravenna, while hundreds of interesting examples might be cited, of successive eras, bringing the history of gold-grounded mosaic down to the 15th century; the ceilings and walls of St. Marc's of Venice alone affording examples of several periods of its later development, the description of which formed the basis of Madame Dudevant's exquisite story, "*Les Maitres Mosaïstes*."

The application of the gold-grounded mosaic to the *exterior* of buildings, in the friezes, spiral columns, and other portions of the structure, is, however, one of the most suggestive features in the history of the art. The tesserae at that time being formed of glass, coloured at the back, the vitreous external surface effectually resisted the action of the atmosphere, of which the perfect preservation of specimens which have been exposed to the air for seven centuries is sufficient proof. A specimen of this class of tesserae may be seen in Westminster Abbey, in the tomb of Henry II. which was executed in Italy.

The only modern attempts at mosaic of a high character are those in St. Peter's at Rome, by means of which all the celebrated pictures of Raphael and others, formerly decorating that building, have been so skilfully transformed to stone, that a careless spectator would never guess that he was not looking on painted canvas. I have visited the ateliers in which such works are produced, and, from what I saw, am convinced that nothing would be easier than to establish a similar school in this country, whose principal duty should be the recording in "*pictorial stone*" in our great public buildings such national *fasti* as ought not to be confided to the more perishable keeping of paint and canvas, and which sculpture could not fittingly represent. At the same time, the production of exquisite miniatures for jewellery, and other objects, would yield sufficient profit to render the establishment self-supporting.

TEN CENTURIES OF ART.

CONCLUSION.

IN a general survey of art so rapid as the foregoing, it has been manifestly impossible even to touch upon all the more salient points of interest. Many, indeed, are so well known and justly appreciated, in proportion to their interest, as not to require any remark from me. Of such points, one of the most remarkable is, that at which any branch of industrial art merges from one of personal interest and personal execution, into one of multifarious interest and manifold manipulation. This occurs when division of labour is first sought as a means of economy; when each portion of a fabricated object, passing through different hands, the artistic merit of the whole is decreased, while its mere mechanical excellence is greatly improved. This kind of artistic deterioration is carried still farther by the subsequent adoption of machinery, eventually substituted for nearly all hand labour, which necessarily destroys the little sentiment remaining in the stage of the minute subdivision of manual skill, which still left some slight mark of intelligence on each particular part of the work.

The machine produces exquisitely even textures, beautiful uniformity, and dozens, —grosses,—thousands of objects where human hands created one, and all these so *alike* as greatly to aid and facilitate the wholesale transactions of commerce, rendering the examination of any separate article, after a general sample has been seen, a perfectly unnecessary waste of time. But in the development of our productive arts in this direction, which has been carried to the greatest possible extent by the great manufacturers of England, artistic features have been entirely lost sight of. On the other hand, cheapness, quantity, and a pervading quality of *soundness* and solidity, have given us the command of the markets of the world in certain branches of manufacture.

Our continental neighbours have pursued a somewhat different course. They have rather developed the artistic feeling, aided, certainly, by the subdivision of labour in production, but never losing sight of a good original design as the all-important thing, the more or less cheap reproduction of which was deemed of less consequence than the excellent manner in which the artistic idea was preserved in the

process of multiplication. Even in the partial adoption of machinery they have not so much sought cheapness as a more excellent and unfailing mode of reproduction, in some cases, than hand labour. Thus, the Jacquard loom was not invented to produce cheap silks, but, on the contrary, to facilitate the more perfect reproduction of the most rich and exquisite designs in that material. In following out this feeling our neighbours have been left behind in quantity and in cheapness. But they have stolen a long march upon us in the direction of beauty, and they have educated a race of intellectual artizans so cultured to the appreciation of that beauty, that their more artistic labours are to them no toil, compared to the dull, machine-like, unintellectual drudgery carried on in our great centres of industrial art. As an illustration, of the results of these differences, let us look at the aspect of some of the great French manufactories as compared to our own. At Malonais, for instance, the great extra-suburban seat of the Rouen cotton works, the traveller may see a magnificent château-like building—one among a hundred such—approached by avenues of limes, or oriental planes, through the midst of a carefully-kept flower-garden. The fine range of buildings in the rear, lighted by large and handsome windows, are not suites of apartments for the accommodation of a stud of race horses below, and troops of over-fed and half-employed servants above, as, judging from analogy, an aristocratic English traveller might imagine. No: this extensive building contains well-kept and handsome tiers of noble ateliers, well ventilated, and well fitted up for *comfort* as well as work. In these establishments the proprietor often resides during the whole of the year, especially in the noble manufactories of Alsace, so well described by M. Blanqui in his interesting letters. These industrial colonies are frequently the property of members of the nobility, and the hereditary arms belonging to historic names are blazoned over the entrance, receiving in this new situation the signet of a truer nobility than was ever earned in predatory, or even patriotic war.

Compare this state of things with what we see in English "workshops." What is yonder black and smoky pile? An agglomeration of formless chimneys, vomiting forth endless dark clouds of lurid smoke on one side, and on the other, a mass of far-reaching, longitudinal openings (the long lights), glazed with small panes of dingy glass. The black and naked walls both of the exterior and interior have a bleak, comfortless, wretched, and depressing aspect; they frown darkly and ominously upon the spectator—a sadness creeps over him,—no wonder that he shudders: he is in the vicinity of a Lancashire cotton factory. A wretched scene is that surrounding this place; it is a country blasted and disfigured by soot and smoke, and by the trampling of reckless feet, confined to no path; for there is no garden—no tree—no flower—nothing of nature—all is blackened, dead, and, as it were, accursed, by the blast of some impending and demoniac spirit. But, reader, this state of things is—*economy*! The absence of comfort, of gardens, of trees, of flowers, has "reduced the calicoes a farthing per yard," and the French have been undersold and driven out of the markets of Monte Video—of Canton—of the world. This is presumed to be unanswerable. But let us look to *final* results, rather than the present condition of affairs. The French and others have preserved the artistic feeling in the struggle to multiply

cheaply the products of industrial art. We have lost ours. If, then, these opponents should now adopt all our improvements in machinery, exhibited so fully and fairly to them in the Crystal Palace, backed by their superior taste, what will then be the consequence? I leave to our manufacturers to answer that question themselves, for they now foresee that its answer and solution are impending, and brought some score of years nearer by the teachings of the great Exhibition. But, with the energy peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon race, they have made, and are making, gigantic efforts to restore to the industrial arts of this country that beauty of design which will alone ensure their permanent pre-eminence. The success of such endeavours, in their individual branches, I have referred to in the foregoing pages.

THE GREAT EXHIBITION.

At the momentous crisis just referred to, the great international Exhibition was proposed. To Mr. Henry Cole I believe the initiation of that important event is due. Mr. Cole has been an active man for some years in matters pertaining to the improvement of national industrial art; but his endeavours have not always been responded to by our manufacturers. In his attempts to set before the public certain specimens of *art manufacture* of a superior class, the producers thought that the royalty, or per centage claimed by the suggestor on the production of particular designs furnished by him, was a troublesome tax, and the furtherance of the scheme was thus crushed at its very outset. A general exhibition of native productions was then suggested and carried out by the active energy of this gentleman in the rooms of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi, which was, however, but poorly responded to, and the display was small. It was an effort in the right direction nevertheless. Prizes were then proposed by the Society of Arts for designs; but their awards, especially in such cases as that of the Felix Summerly tea service, gave such dissatisfaction that the attempt was, after some further efforts, abandoned. But out of the failure of the small exhibition and the small prizes a much larger idea sprang. The native producers not having responded to the call, it was sought to stimulate them by foreign rivalry, and an international exhibition was proposed by the ever-active Mr. Cole. A petition was placed upon a table in the rooms of the Society of Arts, stating the expected advantages to be derived from such a scheme, and requesting royal patronage for carrying it out. But the signatures were slow in coming in, and when I appended my own name there were but very few others as yet attached to the paper.

The royal patronage was, however, obtained, and not till then did there appear any probability of carrying out the project; but the patronage of the Prince Albert immediately turned the tide in its favour, for the masses of our productive classes are as yet led more by the name, and the old *prestige* of royal patronage than by any well-formed judgment of their own, as may easily be conceived, when we see the ready sale found for prints, in endless variety of sameness, of royal progresses through arches of greenery, and among coloured flags, and other conventional modes of regal greeting; and royal laying of first stones with silver or golden trowels.

Suffice it to say that the point was carried, and the Prince ruled supreme over the project, while Mr. Cole was appointed, with a handsome salary, to superintend, with an executive commission, the carrying out of the scheme.

But all at present seems little, and on a neat manageable scale. The nursing of the notion was all in a small way ; but the projectors were unconsciously nursing a baby giant, and one of rapid growth. The glitter of royal patronage, by calling forth general attention, ended in enlisting the serious consideration of the industry of all nations. They perceived, far beyond the projectors, the ultimate results of such a display of industrial power, and entered upon it worthily, as something far higher in the way of contest than the game of soldiering, or any other governmental pastime in which neither the greatness nor the interests of the people are concerned.

The idea, when cast forth like a little ball, was a mere apple of discord, inscribed with a promise of reward "to the most beautiful" among the works of the world ; and was at first neglected, and kicked about like any other unobserved trifle ; but when once gilded by the smiles of royalty, it became a conspicuous object ; the glittering bauble was seen, and its inscription interpreted in a much wider sense than the inscribers dreamed of. The peoples took up the ball, and struck it round the earth, and the thing, once free of the laboratory of its Frankensteins, became a mighty monster in the hands of the industry of the world.

Our own national enthusiasm reverberated the shout of other nations, and it became evident that the industrial Exhibition, shooting far beyond the limits expected by its originators, would become one of the great events of the world. In this unexpected state of affairs, a small clique was no longer a fit organ of management ; and though among their friends and adherents were many men of real ability, the usual sins of cliqueism became rampant ; the decisions in the competitions for designs for the building, and for the medals, were cramped and warped by it, and gave universal dissatisfaction. The decision came to at last, that their own artists should make their own design for their building, and so reserve to themselves whatever credit might be achieved, was the cause of general indignation ; and rival propositions were immediately put forward, of such various kinds, that one was forcibly reminded of the story of the city about to be suddenly fortified ; for which purpose the cobbler recommended leather, the tailor cloth, the mason bricks, and the glazier glass ! In the case of the Exhibition building, the glazier's proposition silenced all competition. Mr. Paxton, the eminent constructor of greenhouses and conservatories, recommended an enlarged building of that kind, which proposition, backed by the interest of a noble duke, and favourably viewed by the Prince, carried the day, especially as the great conservatory at Kew was already in existence as a pattern to show exactly the kind of thing proposed.

Many were at first opposed to the scheme ; the idea of so monstrous a cucumber frame appeared at first ridiculous ; but the idea was nevertheless a good one, and the erection of a glass conservatory for exotic silks and bronzes instead of ferns or palms, turned out entirely successful. This success, however, was a lucky haphazard, quite at variance with the intentions of the managerial clique. A spirited manufacturer was soon found ready to undertake the building, and run the risk of being paid out

of the profits, then pretty well felt to be no risk at all, for the world was already at work for the contest, and several spirited capitalists and noblemen had made offers to guarantee the payment of any deficiency that might eventually accrue if the receipts were inadequate.

The time came, the labours of the world's industry were collected, and it was determined to open the display with considerable state—with a ceremonial procession. This could not fail to be an interesting, indeed a sublime spectacle. The producers of all the marvels of skill, intelligence, and beauty, there collected—the creators of the wonders of the world's industry,—electing chiefs in each department of art, of scientific constructions, and of exquisite mechanical fabrics to lead this great triumphal march, thus formed of the *elite* of the wealth-producers of the world—the delegated industrials of the universe—the most worthy representatives of the “wealth of nations”—the true civilizers of all countries—the creators of the things of beauty, which, in decorating our homes in the smallest details of domestic appliances, educate and refine the world, and lead it a step in advance by every new creation of design, and by every new beauty developed in its execution—such a procession, made up of the productive intellect of the universe, would indeed have been a glorious sight, and an unmistakeable sign of the world's progress; but this was not to be. We have misconceived the nature of the intended ceremony. The principle adopted by the managerial clique was, that the maker of the jewel should not be the person honoured, but rather the gentlemen who ordered the box to put it in, and the makers of the box so ordered by them. It was not the founders of the feast who were to be honoured, but the men who laid their cloth. This will scarcely be believed when the influence of the presiding clique has ceased, and when the press, anxious to aid the project and give it all the advantage of the *prestige* of its royal patronage, shall have ceased to advertise the perfection of all the arrangements. It will then scarcely be believed that the procession was positively formed of the clique itself and their adherents, garnished with a few noble lords in court dresses, a few military men in their regimental scarlet and gold; and, in addition, the planners, contractors, painters, &c., who had been engaged in the erection of the temporary building!* It is beyond credence; and when to this is added, that the exhibitors, the men who had expended time, energy, money, and intellect, to a vast extent in the production of that unparalleled display, were not even admitted to view the opening ceremony of the feast of their own providing, from which they were utterly excluded, in favour of persons who were about to be well paid for all they did—the case then appears a truly extraordinary one.

Never was a greater cheat put upon royalty than when the gracious presence of the Queen, the Prince, and their family was insulted with a performance by the stage-managers, treasurers, lower officials, scene-shifters, and even the glaziers, painters, and joiners of the temporary theatre, instead of one by the real actors.

The clumsiness and bad taste of the national fête was carried beyond the precincts

* No one would have wished to see Mr. Paxton excluded from the procession, as he was himself an exhibitor, and of a very capital and most extensive piece of work; but then all this was paid for, and well paid for; while the Exhibition itself was provided by the exhibitors at their own expense—and that enormous.

of the building. Our illustrious visitors, thus excluded from their own feast, when seeking to leave the Park in search of other amusement, found the road at Cumberland-gate blocked up by the half-finished erection of the marble arch; a clumsy and insufficient side-gate being the only mode of egress at that point, through ruts of newly-laid gravel up to the axles of the wheels.

A drive down Regent Street was perhaps next proposed: the great London thoroughfare of the West End. But no; the pavement is up—the line is blocked—the visitor must drive through the back streets. But then there is still the great National Museum—the visitor drives to its doors; but they are closed,—and a great placard coolly announces that they will continue so for eight days. Really John Bull does not understand giving fêtes, or he allows those to manage them who do not.

But let us hasten to the ceremonial closing of the Exhibition; for it is promised to make amends to the exhibitors for the insult offered to them on its opening. They are to have free admission on two days. It is true that the glory of the show is somewhat tarnished—the crimson cloth is faded—the smart painting has lost its freshness—the dust of millions of active feet has done its work on all—but the collected works of the world form still a glorious sight; and with a little ceremonial, a formal reception by royalty, or, at all events, by the leading members of the ministry, &c., at the principal entrance, with a few such additional compliments as the removal of the railing from the great diamond, to allow a more privileged and closer view, and the appointment of guides and officers, in some little 'pomp of office, to explain the British portion to foreign visitors, and the foreign portion to our native exhibitors,—a few such arrangements might go some way towards repairing the former want of taste. But things were not viewed in this manner by the managers, and I am almost ashamed to state how the matter was really conducted. However, the truth must be told. There was not only no fitting reception offered—there was not only no closer view of the great state jewel, or any other remarkable object prepared, but, on the contrary, the diamond was *removed altogether*, and various kinds of demolition were going on all around, ere the producers of the Exhibition were *invited* to enter. On their arrival at the glorious scene of their own creation, they found no posse of ministerial state to receive them, but were astonished by a gang of sappers and miners busily knocking up the asphalte pavement into dangerous heaps, and poking great planks and beams about, among the legs of the visitors, who were compelled, if they did not retire in disgust, to scramble over such encumbrances into the building, where many of the most attractive things had been already, like the diamond, removed. To crown all, the *police* and their families received free admission on the same day. Many of the police are doubtless respectable men, but so long as society requires the exercise of their profession, the "thief-taker" must necessarily, though a useful member of the community, occupy a very inferior station in it, at all events one which is generally considered to exclude him from participating as a visitor among men of more honourable station.

The indiscriminate distribution of prizes is a subject too unpleasant to dwell upon, especially while the disgust, just or unjust, of so many is as yet hardly cooled; and indeed the good or bad distribution of awards by a series of arrangements so

constituted, is a matter of no consequence, and does not at all interfere with the great triumph art and industry have achieved.*

It only remains, therefore, to allude to the finally closing scene, which, with all its dismal inefficiency, was yet incapable of tarnishing the glory of the real actors in the great drama just concluded; its bad taste and bad management only recoil upon its concoctors, the clique, and their immediate adherents. As in the opening ceremony, these gentlemen and their friends assumed the chief characters, and read papers, lauding themselves and their management, to which, *proh pudor!* they attributed the success of the great display still glittering around, while a final insult was impudently flung at the exhibitors. They were fenced off with ropes, &c. to a distance where the reading of those statements was inaudible; the space within, except some accommodation to *female* exhibitors (as the ladies who had furnished works of art to the great assemblage were termed), being occupied by the members of the commission and other officials. This "lame and impotent" conclusion appeared even to damp and chill the well-known good nature of the Prince, who went through the reading of a long paper without any of his wonted energy or pleasing affability. But there was still time to repair errors. This miserable climax was without doubt to be redeemed by the proffer of distinguished honours to the leading producers of the different classes of those exquisite works which had just concentrated the attention and admiration of the world, and who had incurred such great expense and sacrifice of time to represent themselves worthily in the great display without fee or reward.

But no! The "fountain of honour" was advised to shed its distinctions among the managing officials. Military gentlemen, no doubt very active, useful, and efficient in the humble position of managers and arrangers of the objects exhibited, and of the police by which they were to be protected, receive "governments." But more astounding is the offer to Mr. Paxton, the designer of the temporary building, of the honour of knighthood, not proposed to any one of the eminent men for whose works that temporary protection was erected; and more extraordinary still, that he, the independent and energetic carver-out of his own well-deserved fortunes, should accept a distinction so uncalled-for, and, as regards the superior claims of eminent exhibitors, so invidious. That the same honour should be offered to and accepted by the contractor and builder, appears still more singular, when his respectability and strong good sense are so well known, and which must

* One ought not, however, to omit to place on record two or three flagrant errors, to say nothing more, by which this distribution of awards was unenviably distinguished. The want of any fixed principle in these awards is exemplified in such cases as the following:—Mr. Cundall, a publisher, exhibits a choice specimen of bookbinding; but, instead of awarding a medal to Mr. Cundall, the bookbinder himself is sought out and the prize given to him. Many will agree in this view; but then what is to be said to the next case? Mr. Ingram, the proprietor of the "Illustrated News," exhibits the machinery by which his paper is printed, and receives a medal, while Mr. Appelgarth, the well-known inventor and maker of the machine, is not noticed. These are contradictions in principle. The next example is one either of ignorance or unfairness; a prize is given to a gentleman, Mr. ——— for bookbinders' cloth, —while in the trade it is well known that his articles hold a very inferior rank—while Mr. Wilson, the recent introducer of the ultra-marine book-cloth, esteemed by the trade the most brilliant fabric yet offered to them, and in which the official illustrated catalogue itself is bound, as the most striking novelty of that branch of manufacture—Mr. Wilson, receives no award at all!!

have made him fully aware that he had done nothing more than carry out a common trading transaction, with the ordinary skill and energy which has always, I believe, characterised his business transactions.

One honourable exception, in one of the most beneficially active of the managers, ought to be recorded. One gentleman, holding office in the commission of management, refused not only the proffered "knighthood," but also the proffered salary, though to the latter his continual and efficient labours fully entitled him. There remains, however, the great event itself, unsullied by the folly of these vagaries, and the sins, both of omission and commission, on the part of the clique into whose immediate management the matter fell; for the names of several of our great industrialists made use of in the list of commissioners, &c., were mere *noms de guerre*, as those gentlemen had little to do with the positive arrangements, all the faults of which, as well as the gentlemen who perpetrated them, will be soon forgotten, notwithstanding the attempts to perpetuate them in the shape of daguerreotype portraits, and their publication in illustrated newspapers, ticketed and labelled with the titles of their various ephemeral offices.

But all the petty drawbacks, as I have said, will pass away and be forgotten, while the great event itself will live on. Its effect in stimulating the industry of all countries has been already felt, and the true dignity of labour in every class of art has been made manifest, as well as the superiority of its distinctions, to every other kind of rank. The great democratic and industrial principle of the amity of nations, despite their governments, has been eloquently preached by the works of beauty they have offered up on the great altar of international love. The non-productive classes have shrunk into the background; factitious titles of rank, and all pretended social elevations founded on any other claim than successful labour, have had their brittleness exposed; the petty views of aristocratic influence, which would have made a mere gew-gaw of the great event, have exhibited the helplessness of their demonstrations in front of the great battalions of the world's real workers. That glorious labour which has at last seen the noble spectacle of its accumulated creations, fitly represented, must soon assume the positions of dignity, and the places, of power towards which the late event has so accelerated the speed of its advance.

The international Exhibition will be repeated, and that at no far distant period; and its next advent will be a still more effective promoter of the true interests of the real producers of the wealth of all countries. But the next time its management must be no little private matter—no affair of a small clique of well-intentioned, but unsuitable gentlemen, supported by a few noble lords, and enlivened by the uniforms of a few military men. No! such a meeting is necessarily a truly democratic and industrial fête, and must be managed entirely by the people. It will be so next time, and it will then be seen whether the founders of the feast will be excluded from the honours of their own festival, and the banquet of their own providing.

I am more brief in conclusion than I could wish, were it not that I am preparing a special treatise on international exhibitions and public competitions of all kinds, with a detailed analysis of the decisions of the juries and their mode of proceeding in the late event.

